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HISTORICAL REMARKS

ON THE

TAXATION

OF

FREE STATES,

IN A

SERIES OF LETTERS TO A FRIEND.

By Sir William Meredith Bart

Πᾶσα ἀποικία, εἰ μὴ πασχούσα, τιμὰ τῇ μητροπόλει ἀδικουμένη δι, ἀλλοτριεῖται. Thuc:

Every Colony that is well treated, retains her Honour and Attachment to the Mother Country; but is alienated by Injustice.

L O N D O N:

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HISTORICAL REMARKS

TAXATION

FREE STATES

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L E T T E R S

T O A

F R I E N D.

L E T T E R I.

April 30, 1778.

S I R,

I THOUGHT myself much obliged to you for quitting, though but for a short time, the active and chearful scene of life in which you are engaged, to visit an old friend in the retired situation where you found me.

Nothing, I believe, was farther from your thoughts than to converse on public matters, in a place so private, and with a man so sequestered from the world and its occupations as myself. But your heart was too full, and your mind too much impressed by the present state of your country, not to give some expression to your sentiments, and some vent to your feelings. You found that a concern for our common danger had reached even the inhabitant of this distant, homely mansion; and we fell insensibly upon the common topic of America.—It was a wish of

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much

much kindness to myself, but little to you, that you would have prolonged your stay; but your engagements would not allow it. You left me, you know, just as our conversation began on a few passages of two distinguished pamphlets. One of which, entitled "An History of the Colonization of the FREE STATES of Antiquity," you had the goodness to bring with you; the other, the "Dean of Gloucester's Tracts," you found here.

The passage in the latter which drew out our comments, is in his Fourth Tract on Political and Commercial Subjects, "where (says he) "I am far from charging our colonies with being SINNERS ABOVE "OTHERS; because, I believe, (and if I am wrong, let the history of "all colonies, whether ancient or modern, from the days of Thucidides "down to the present time, confute me if they can) I say, till that is "done, I believe, it is the nature of them all to aspire at Independency, "and set up for themselves."

The Poet we admire makes one of his Kings say, upon the revolt of his subjects*,

"Are these things necessities?

"Then let us meet them like necessities."

You and I did not form any regular opinion of Dr. Tucker's idea of an alliance with America; but we both agreed, that should we take up our pens in support of such a plan, we would either *usurp* so much of the Dean's profession, who is a Minister of the Gospel, or assume so much of our own, which is that of *Christians*, as to recommend an alliance on the basis of good-will, charity, and peace; unaccompanied by declarations of enmity, and expressions of malevolence.

* Shakespeare's Henry IV.

It was no particular sentence, but the general tenor of the other pamphlet, on which we had some discourse. The author (I am told) is a gentleman of North Britain. Much is the literary world indebted to his countrymen, for the many excellent performances they have published of late years. This person is of great knowledge, and writes in a masterly stile; but in his History of the Colonization of Free States, has confined himself to the mere *practice* of sovereign states in the government of their colonies, particularly in respect of taxation. I wish he had gone further; because, the knowledge that we are interested in acquiring, is,

First, What were the grounds and principles on which the power of taxation was founded; and

Secondly, What effects the exercise of that power has commonly produced.

Had the learned commentator proceeded to this part of ancient history, he would have shewn not only (as Dr. Tucker truly asserts) that "it is the nature of them all to aspire at Independency;" but he might also have explained to us, why nature may be supposed to have had her share in impelling so many nations "to set up for themselves."

He has, indeed, done more than any other writer towards bringing the ground of American taxation within the precincts of liberty. He has endeavoured to shew its conformity to the examples of the freest states of antiquity, the Carthaginian, Greek, and Roman.

But, of all guides to public measures, PRECEDENTS are the most fallacious. The temper and habits of *one* age and *one* nation, may be ill suited to the fashions of another time, and to the genius of another people; and to derive equal success from a similarity of measures, not only the same wisdom and fortitude are necessary, but, what cannot be insured, the same fortune.—Great, indeed, are the benefits of example, if well considered;

sidered; great are the dangers also, if partially or injudiciously applied.— Principles must be investigated; means weighed with their ends; times and seasons observed; and what is the first consideration in a free government, the genius and disposition of the governed.

If the partial exercises of arbitrary power in Free States, either ancient or modern, could authorize despotism, no tyranny would be unwarranted. It was said, "that he who was free in Sparta, was most so; but a slave " there, was the greatest slave upon earth." But, I trust, we shall never hear either the condition of a Spartan helot, or the modern treatment of a West Indian negro, recommended as samples of freedom and humanity.

As far as example can teach wisdom and promote justice, the one is to be deduced from the *principles*, the other from the *effects* of public councils.

The length of my letters on this extensive subject may, perhaps, tire you; but remember, it is a task enjoined by yourself, and that it is performed by

Your sincere friend, &c.

L E T T E R II.

May 7, 1778.

S I R,

IN our late conversation, how strongly did you dissent from Dr. Tucker's assertion, "That it is the nature of all colonies to aspire at Independence!"

You thought the revolt of a colony from its parent state ought as little to be ascribed to any impulse of Nature, as the most unnatural disobedience of a child towards a real parent. Nor can I forget the earnestness with which you asked, Whether the authority of a mother country was an idle phantom? a mere charm, that loses its strength, if you question its reality?

You know, my friend, how little philosophy has fallen to my lot; but still you made me promise to ascertain (and I will do it as well as I am able) the interest that Nature may be supposed to bear in the connection betwixt a colony and her parent state.

In the first place, let us see what are those bonds of union and affection that Nature herself has instituted. She has implanted in all created beings a love and inclination in the mother to her offspring. But, does this love extend to the mother country and her plantations? No. Parental love is founded not only in the property of blood, but in those various offices, from whence

" The charities

" Of father, son, and brother, first were known."

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Honour

Honour, love, obedience, naturally follow a regular, prudent, and affectionate education. The first fruits appear in simplicity and innocence; the next in observance of the parent's will, and a studiousness to attain the improvements he directs; at length they ripen into duty, reverence, attention, cordiality, and attachment. Such is the harvest of filial gratitude, and where care is taken in the cultivation, the ground seldom proves unfaithful.

But these tenderneſſes, as well as all other perſonal connections, are formed and cemented by the habits of friendship, and endearments of ſociety. They never can ſubſiſt betwixt people that have long been ſevered, and are far diſtant from each other.

Does then *inſtinct* operate betwixt a mother country and her colony? Perhaps we may trace in that inſtinctive, ſhort-lived inclination of animals, ſomething more analagous than in that permanent affection, which diſtinguiſhes our own ſpecies. For, in animals, we ſee that Nature has given the mother ſuch a portion of tenderneſs, affiduity, and care, as is neceſſary for the preſervation and nurture of her young ones; but the young ones, as they grow up, from a ſtate of impotency to ſelf ſupport, become indifferent to their mother; “ and the mother grows HARDENED againſt her “ young ones, as though they were not her's. (Job, c. 39, v. 16.)

If the comparison does not ſtrike you, I will not mark it. Still it may be asked, Are not the mother country and her colony the ſame country? Does not the principle of loving our country, apply equally to both?

Let us explain terms before we reaſon upon principles. What then do we mean by the term *Country*, as relative to the duty we owe, and the love we bear it? We do not mean the ſoil; we do not mean the climate; but, we mean that Conſtitution of Government, by which we enjoy peace, ſecurity, and freedom. You, my friend, love your country, becauſe you are born to the inheritance of her laws; becauſe, under THEM, you enjoy the privilege,

privilege, "sentire quæ velis, & fari quæ sentias," not as Tacitus enjoyed it, by the permission of a gracious Emperor, but as your own birth-right. It is a trite quotation, but for its aptness you may allow me to repeat a noted sentence in Tully's Offices *. "Dear are our parents, our children, our relations, and our friends; but the love of our country, comprehends all affections whatsoever." For there is a self that resides within us, and forms the centre of all our passions.

"Self-love and social are the same."

POPE.

More strongly still are self-love and public love united; for, it is society that constitutes the chief happiness of human life; but there is no enjoyment of society without liberty, and public love with public spirit is the guardian of liberty.

But, in order to identify the love, secure the allegiance, and command the duty of the colony, it is necessary for the mother country, on *her* part, to govern the colony exactly upon the same principles, and according to the same rules, forms, and orders, as her resident citizens are governed by; it is also necessary to maintain every barrier of freedom, both in person and property, within the province, in the same state as they are kept within her own precincts. For, if the constitution is once changed upon the colonist, the country is no longer *his* country; he becomes an alien. How is it possible, in nature, for any man to love a country which gives liberty to others, but denies it to himself; and which protects the property of other men, but lays violent hands upon his own †?

* Cari parentes, cari liberi, cari propinqui, cari amici, sed omnes omnium caritates patria una complexa est.

† Πᾶσα ἀποικία, εὖ μὲν πάσχειν, τιμᾷ τὴν μητροπολιν, ἀδικουμένη δὲ, ἀλλοτριῶται.

Thuc. lib. i.

We HAVE known "How joyful and good a thing it is;" we also know by experience, how *practicable* a thing it is, for brethren, though at a vast distance, "to dwell together in unity;" but, that unity will be preserved no longer than it retains its similitude to that "precious ointment," which was poured not on the head only, but "went down to all skirts of the cloathing."

Agreeing then with Dr. Tucker, that, "Our colonies are not sinners "above the rest, but that from the days of Thucidides to the present time, "they have all revolted." Let us pursue that equitable maxim, "audi "alteram partem." Let us enquire, Whether from the most antient times to these modern ones, history can produce one single instance, that any mother country ever governed her colonies according to the principles of the same constitution, which her resident citizens were governed by? And whether the exercise of an unlimited power, and the exactions of subsidies, by the mother country, have not preceded the revolts of the Colonies?

As to which was the *sinning* party, and which the party *sinned against*, we will, if you please, leave that for the Dean of Gloucester to determine. You will soon hear from me again.

In the mean time believe, that I am, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R III.

May 21, 1778.

S I R,

BEFORE I relate any particular events from the history of Carthage, permit me to mark a particularity in her fate; which is, that there is no historian of that country.—And, is it not strange, that so great a nation, if not the first to invent, yet the first that improved, encouraged, and diffused the use of letters, should be left, like the lion in the fable, without one native writer, to define her constitution, compose her annals, and preserve the fame of her statesmen and her heroes?

What we collect of Carthage is gleaned from the histories of other nations. The little information I shall send you, is taken from Polybius; but, to give all possible authority to my narrative, permit me to remind you who my author was. Polybius was a native and citizen of that famous republic of Achaia, which, though least in power, became the first state of Greece, by the reputation of wisdom and integrity in her government. Achaia was the centre of union, the arbitrix, judge, and model of all Greece. In this government, Polybius became eminent in the several stations of soldier, statesman, philosopher, and orator. Not only the means of knowledge, but the purest sentiments of liberty were congenial to his birth and education, being the son of Lycortas, who was second to Philopæmen whilst he lived, and at his death became the first man of the state. At an early period of life, Polybius was appointed to great offices; he was minister for foreign affairs, and general of horse.

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When the Romans reduced Greece to the condition of a province, they remained still jealous of the Achæians, and fearful lest some of their chiefs might incite the Grecians to aim once more at a recovery of their freedom, they, therefore, seized an hundred of the principal men of Achæia, and sent them to different prisons in Italy. In this sorrowful company was Polybius. His place of confinement was Rome; where the fame of his learning brought the great Scipio to visit him; he obtained his release, and appointed him tutor to his son. The first effort of his own liberty was to procure that of his surviving countrymen, who were but few. Though Scipio himself made the motion for their deliverance, the Senate appeared averse to compliance, till Cato gave a turn to the debate, by saying, "It was unworthy of a Roman Senate to waste time in debating, whether a few miserable Grecians should be buried in Rome, or in Greece! In the name of the Gods (said he) let the poor wretches chuse their own place of burial *."

After his discharge from imprisonment, Polybius was assigned to the pitiable employment of a Roman Commissary, to settle such constitutions of government, as the Senate thought fit to impose on the different states of Greece. This commission he executed so, as to give his unhappy countrymen as much comfort, as they were capable of receiving.—On his return to Rome, he was taken into Scipio's family, and attended him in all his campaigns. But his time was devoted to the composing of his history. He had been an eye witness to the wreck of many a free state, and it seems his main object to warn future nations against running upon the rocks on which they split.

Happily he has not left us without his opinion pointed to the very subject of the taxation of colonies. He recapitulates first the plea of necessity on which Carthage proceeded to tax her colonies. He then re-

* Plutarch.

marks, that the calamities which ensued were incomparably greater than all she suffered in a war of twenty-four years duration with Rome; that the attempt to curtail the pay of the foreign mercenaries, was the spring of these calamities, which were swelled up to a torrent by the taxation of the colonies.

After summing up these facts, Polybius gives this short but important lesson; "That they who are intrusted with the administration of public affairs, ought not to form their systems on the exigencies of the day, but look forward to the consequences which their measures may produce in future times *."

I am, &c.

* Οὕτως ὡς ποτε διὰ τῆς ὀρθῆς βουλευομένων πρὸς τὸ παρὸν μόνον, ἔτι δὲ μάλλον, πρὸς τὸ μάλλον ἀποβλεπεῖν.

L E T T E R IV.

May 28, 1778.

S I R,

I AM afraid I shall trespass on your patience. It was my intention to say no more of Carthage than what relates merely to the taxation of her colonies. It was at the close of the first war with Rome, when that measure was substantially and extensively adopted; but I wish to give you a short account of the events of that period, that you may draw your own comment on *this* precedent of the taxation of Colonies. The war had lasted twenty-four years; each country had experienced great vicissitudes of fortune; each had sustained many losses of fleets and armies; and a respite became equally necessary and equally desirable on both sides. But the peace, when obtained, was understood to be but temporary; each nation had suffered too many injuries to make a reciprocal friendship lasting; each party had gained success enough to hope for a better event of another war. They were jealous and envious of each other; Carthage as anxious to preserve the dominion of the sea, as Rome was ambitious to wrest it from her hands.

In this situation, every ground of present necessity and of future danger called upon the government of Carthage for a supply and reparation of her finances. But there was another and more urgent distress still; for, such had been the inattention of her ministers, that there was no money in the Exchequer to pay off the arrears of those foreign troops, whom they had employed in Sicily.

At this dangerous and important crisis, HANNO (the chief of the party, which stood in opposition to the Barcine faction) took the lead in the affairs
of

of Carthage*. The administration of the colonies was entirely in his hands. Hanno appears to have been a very indolent man†, and a most improvident minister; without a capacity to foresee and guard against events, but waiting always for events to be governed by them‡.

The body of unpaid dissatisfied mercenaries consisted of 20,000 men, proud of their services and conscious of their importance, who had withstood the whole force of Rome, and procured peace for Carthage. But so thoughtless were the ministers, that they received this discontented army within their walls; their clamours encreased every hour. Hanno attempted to sooth them by a speech, but his eloquence, however efficient in the Senate-house, made no impression on the old soldiers. They took up arms. The Senate began a treaty; but the more concessions were offered, the higher the malecontents rose in their demands. They now required payment, at an high price, for every horse they had lost during the war, and that their arrears should be computed at the highest rate that corn had ever sold for, during the time of their service. These demands it was impracticable either to liquidate or discharge. The Senate, therefore, resolved to oppose force to force. Hanno assumed the conduct of the war, and by

* Απὸν ὁ ὑπαρχὸς τῶν Καρχηδονίων.

† Απὸν ἔως ἀνεγγραφήν ἡθρως ————— Hanno ignavè se geflit. (*Causabon's Transf.*)

‡ Demosthenes frequently mentions a minister of this sort as the worst that can be. And Lord Bacon quotes his authority for marking it as the difference betwixt a good and a bad minister, that the former governs events, and the latter is governed by them. His Latin translation of Demosthenes is, *A cordatis viris res ipsæ ducendæ, & non ipsi eventus tantum persequi coguntur.* Advancement of Learning. Fol. Ed. 533.

‡ Καὶ μὴ διὰ τὸτο δύνασθαι μάθην, ὅτ' οἱ τοὺς οὐθὺς πολέμῳ χρωμένους, ἐκ ἀκολουθῶν τοῖς πράγμασιν, ἀλλ' αὐτοὺς ἐμπροσθεν εἶναι τῶν πραγμάτων. What follows is very strong and ingenious: Καὶ τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον, ὡς περὶ τῶν στρατευμάτων ἀξίωσιν, αὐτὴς στρατηγὸς ἡγεῖσθαι ὅπως καὶ τῶν πραγμάτων τῶς ἐν βουλευομένοις ἡγεῖσθαι χρὴ, ἵνα ἐν ἐκείνῳ δοκῇ, ταῦτα πράττεται, καὶ μὴ τὰ συμβαινόντα ἀναγκάζονται διωκεῖν. 1st against Philip. Demost.

the industry of the officers whom he employed in the inferior departments, having soon prepared an army, defeated the mercenaries in the first engagement; but presuming on their want of discipline, and that they would never be able to rally, he returned to the city as if all was over; and his officers, who were infected with the same presumption as himself, neglected to guard their camp. But these veterans, who had been trained under the great Amilcar, knew how to rally as well as to retreat; they had retired in a close compact body to an adjacent hill; from whence observing the loose and unguarded situation of their enemy, they renewed the engagement, forced the Carthaginian entrenchments, and after killing a great number put the rest to flight, and took possession of the camp, with all the tents, baggage, and machines of war.

Hanno, either intimidated by this event, or conscious of his own inferiority to the revolted Generals, declined all opportunities (though many offered) of risking another battle; he advanced and retired, marched and countermarched, came often close to their entrenchments, and as often retreated from them. This dilatoriness, and disgraceful conduct, obliged the Senate to remove Hanno from the command of the army, and to confer it upon Amilcar.

But the pernicious conduct of Hanno, in his department of minister, had raised other and more dreadful enemies to his country. These were the dependent states and colonies of Carthage; which, till this unhappy period, had formed a main part of her riches and her strength. The Carthaginians were a commercial people, and maintained their greatness by trade and navigation. They had their *Navigation Act* *, by which they restrained their colonies from trading with any other nation but their own. From these colonies they also drew supplies of seamen, soldiers, provisions,

* Vide Polibii Legationes. (The Navigation Act of Charles II. is founded on the same principles as that of Carthage.)

and military stores *. Now these resources not only failed, but were turned against them. But, Polybius tells us, " Their misfortunes were owing to themselves; for, on the pretence of public necessity, they had imposed a double tribute on the cities, and exacted from the country one half of the annual produce. To taxation, they super-added irritation and insult." Our historian informs us, " † That contempt and hatred of " the colonies was the affected tone of Hanno and his Cabinet. Such " Governors as acted with justice and humanity, were disregarded by the " ministry at Carthage; whilst they who behaved with insolence and " cruelty, were caressed and rewarded."

People thus injured wanted no incitements to revolt; a single message was sufficient ‡. Great armies were soon raised in the now rebellious colonies, and the very women brought together their jewels, ornaments, and gold, which formed no inconsiderable fund towards defraying the first expences of the war.

This war lasted almost four years, with such fury, revenge, and havoc, that its enormities and horrors are not paralleled in history. More than once were the city, the state, and the very being of Carthage, on the brink of ruin; the country laid waste; many of the noblest and best citizens, and some of the most eminent commanders, put to death; several of them with horrid tortures, and every circumstance of indignity, that invention could contrive. At length, the Senate, the Generals, and the people, were reduced to such despair, that, as their last and only effort, they com-

* Καρχηδόνιοι τὰς δι κοινᾶς παρασκευᾶς καὶ χορηγίας ἀθροίζοντες ἐκ τῶν κατὰ τὴν λιδοὺν προσόδων, ἐπὶ δὲ πολέμῳ εἰθισμένοι ξυνεκαίς δυνάμεσι.

† Ηκιστα δ' αὐτοὶ σφίσι τῶν τοιούτων καὶ τηλικούτων κακῶν ἰγυγονισαν αἰτίαι—Οἱ γὰρ θαυμάζοντες καὶ τιμῶντες τῶν τε στρατηγῶν, ὧς, τῆς πρῶτης καὶ φιλανθρωπῶς οὕτω πληθεὶ χρημάτων. ἀλλὰ τῆς αὐτοῖς μὲν ἐτοιμαζόμενης πλείστης χορηγίας, καὶ ἐπιστηγίας, τοῖς δὲ κατὰ τὴν χώραν πικροτάτα χρημάτων. Ὡς εἰς τὴν Ἀπὼν.

‡ Τοιγαρὶν οἱ μὲν ἄνδρες ἐκ οἷον πωρεκλησίῳ πρὸς τὴν ἀποστάσιν, ἀλλ' ἄγγιλον μόνον ἰδὴθησαν. Ἄνδρες δὲ γυναῖκες, &c.

pelled every individual citizen to bear arms. Nor could their immediate destruction have been prevented, had it not been for the transcendent abilities of Amilcar; nor could even these have been effectual, had not fortune favoured them with an accidental, unlooked-for division of the rebel forces; for Naravasus, one of their chiefs, came over with a body of troops, just at the eve of an engagement, and enabled him to gain a victory at a time, when defeat must have been fatal. After all, the great genius of Amilcar was fain to condescend to treachery at last; for having received the rebel generals in his tent, as ambassadors to treat for peace, he seized their persons, and then attacking their army by surprize, gave them a decisive blow, which put an end to the war.

But your curiosity will be raised, to know what the Romans were doing at this juncture. We are not particularly informed; but imagination may supply the want of history, so as to describe the eye with which Rome beheld her natural enemy and rival wasting her best blood, and the remains of her impaired strength, in a civil war against those very people, who had enabled her to support a war with Rome. At first, indeed, the Romans observed the late treaty, and affected to talk a language of friendship; but an event soon happened which manifested on which side their wishes lay; for some Roman merchants having attempted to supply the rebels with provisions, the Carthaginians seized the carriages, together with five hundred persons who escorted the convoy. The Senate of Rome, with great haughtiness, demanded their release, which the Carthaginians durst not refuse, and on this concession the Romans renewed their professions of friendship. But they soon threw off the mask.

In the midst of the war, the mercenaries that were garrisoned in Sardinia, revolted also, and murdered the Governor, with all the officers, civil and military, that were commissioned from Carthage. The Carthaginians sent a general of the name of Hanno; but his troops joined the rebels, seized and crucified Hanno. Soon after, these very soldiers were expelled by the Sardinians, who formed a government and constitution of their own;

own; and the island of Sardinia thus assumed a state of Independence. But when the rebellion on the continent was quelled, the Carthaginians attempted to recover Sardinia. Then the Romans interfered. Sardinia was a populous and fertile island; it had furnished great supplies of provisions during the Sicilian war, and (what was still of more consideration) any part of Italy might be invaded from thence; it might serve as a station for ships, a lodgment for troops, and a repository for arms and magazines of all forts.

Rome determined to take advantage of the distresses of Carthage, to deprive her of this valuable, and to her own state *dangerous* possession. No sooner, therefore, did the Carthaginians attempt to bring back the Sardinians to their allegiance, than Rome took them openly into her protection, and even declared war in support of their Independence.

The Carthaginians, in *their* weakened and dejected condition, could not raise their thoughts to a war with Rome. To the cession of Sardinia was added the humiliating demand of a tribute of twelve hundred talents, which they were compelled to pay, as well as submit to the loss of all the resources, consequence, and power, that were annexed to the property of Sardinia.

These were the fruits that Carthage reaped from the taxation of her colonies; yet she did not only sow the seed, but, for a few seasons, gathered in the harvest of taxation; which, after all her unexampled sufferings in the civil war, ended at last in finding herself exhausted, insulted, spoiled, and at length, *taxed* by the very people with whom, through the assistance of her colonies, and in union with them, she had waged war, and made peace upon equal terms.

Whether the example of Carthage goes to the support either of the principle or practice of taxing colonies, I leave to your consideration, and remain always

Your's, &c.

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LETTER

L E T T E R V.

June 14, 1778.

S I R,

THE Roman history affords little matter for comment on the taxation of colonies. There is, however, one event worth your notice, which happened not long before the close of the second Punic war, when Rome was in the greatest danger to which she ever was exposed.

Hannibal had been eight years in Italy, was in the full career of his successes, and Asdrubal his brother advancing with a great army to reinforce him. The Roman legions were grown very deficient, and their treasury was almost exhausted.

At this dangerous and urgent crisis, they applied to their colonies for recruits of men and money. They had at that time thirty colonies in Italy, of which eighteen complied with the requisition, but twelve refused it. In hours of danger and distress, trivial accidents raise great alarms. The Senate was never thrown into greater dismay than by this refusal of the twelve colonies. They expostulated, admonished, called upon them by every tie of common interest, and by every principle of gratitude, consanguinity, and affection; they reminded them of being their own offspring; that they inherited the same birthright in the same laws and liberties with themselves; and the same duty which every son owes his parent, they owed to their common parent Rome*. The colonies, how-

* Admonuerunt, non Campanos, neque Tarentinos eos esse, sed Romanos; inde oriundos, inde in colonias, stirpis augendæ causâ, missos, Quæ liberi parentibus deberent, ea illos Romanis debere, si ulla pietas, si memoria antiquæ patriæ esset. Liv. lib. 27. c. 10.

ever, were deaf to all their remonstrances, and persevered in denial of the supply demanded; but the Senate did not *then* think proper to shew any further resentment at their disobedience, than to pass it over with an indignant silence (*ea tacita indignatio pro dignitate reipublicæ Romanæ visa est.*)

But though they *stifled* their resentment, they did not *forget* it. The memory of this transaction was revived six years after, and then treated with great severity; for, when Hannibal had quitted Italy, and the Romans were again in a state of tranquillity and safety, the Senate summoned the magistrates of the twelve refractory colonies to appear before them, and commanded them to pay double the sum of money, to furnish double the number of men, and double the number of horses, to what the obedient colonies had supplied upon the former requisition. They pleaded strongly against this imposition; but no pretence of inability could protect them, no argument of distress and poverty could mitigate the resolution of the Senate. The tax was levied with punctuality and rigour.

There is one reflection which must naturally occur to you upon this transaction. You cannot but observe, that there was not so total a want of wisdom in the Roman councils, as to endanger the safety of the whole empire, for the silly purpose of levying an inconsiderable tax, and punishing a few refractory colonies. Had they treated these disobedient subjects with partial severity, attempted to deprive them of their constitutional rights and privileges, or to seize their property by violent means, not only the *offending* colonies would have resisted, but, in all human probability, the alarm have been taken by all the rest. But the prudence and moderation of the Senate, whilst it withheld the disaffected from *actual* resistance, secured the love, obedience, and assistance of the others. If Livy's assertion may be credited, “ * That Rome owed her preservation to the

* *Harum coloniarum subsidio tum imperium populi Romani stetit.*

“ voluntary

"voluntary aids of eighteen colonies," we may fairly conclude, that had all the thirty colonies, or a considerable part of them, been driven into rebellion, and been added to the strength of the Carthaginian forces, Hannibal would *then* have proved an over-match for Rome.

I shall extract but one passage more from the Roman annals on the subject of taxation. It is in the celebrated History of the Decline of the Roman Empire. I recollect your saying, that you admire the book, and respect the author. Mr. Gibbons acquaints us, "That the Roman Emperor Galerius, either to gratify his avarice, or to supply the exigencies of the state, made a strict and rigorous inquisition into the property of his subjects, for the purpose of a general taxation, both on their lands and persons. Italy had been for the space of five hundred years, ever since the conquest of Macedon, exempted from taxation. She valued this privilege the more, as it was the only distinction she enjoyed from the other subjects of the empire. She felt it not, therefore, as a violation of her property only, but it hurt her pride to lose this singular privilege." The same writer observes, that "Even when the *spirit of freedom* hath been utterly extinguished, the tamest subjects have sometimes ventured to *resist an unprecedented invasion of their property*. On this occasion (he says) the injury was aggravated by insult, and the sense of private interest was quickened by that of national honour. For, though they had long submitted to despotism in every form, they could not yet suffer Rome to be numbered among the *tributary* cities of the Empire. The rising fury of the people was encouraged by the authority of the Senate; and the feeble remains of the Prætorian guards embraced this honourable pretence, to draw their swords in the service of their country, and the Emperor Galerius was *deposed*.*"

* History of the Fall and Decline of the Roman Empire, vol. I. p. 408.

Having

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Having now ended my remarks on such pertinent instances as occurred in the Roman history, I shall proceed to execute, as well as I can, your commands in exploring the Greek history, being at all times

Your obedient and faithful, &c.

G

LETTER

L E T T E R VI.

June 27, 1778.

S I R,

YOU have read the assertion, that * the history of Greece affords no instance of any state which had power to levy contributions or taxes from its colonies, and did not put that power in execution.

I have examined the history of Greece with some attention, but cannot find that any such *principle* as a right to tax colonies, on the ground of their being colonies, was ever held; or that the *practice* of taxing colonies, as colonies, did ever prevail in Greece.

It will be enough for me to send you a few remarks on the policy of the two principal states, Sparta and Athens.

Till the battle of Marathon, Sparta had taken a decisive lead in the affairs of Greece; but so little was taxation any part of her system, that the use of gold and silver was prohibited; iron money, which could have no currency in foreign countries, was alone permitted. The character of the Spartan government is finely drawn by one of her exiled Kings: “† Poverty (said he) is her mother and her nurse; by abstinence, she preserves her virtue; in the school of adversity, she learns wisdom; and by the steadiness of her discipline, maintains her liberty and her power.”

* History of the Colonization of Free States.

† Demaratus being asked by Xerxes, “If the Grecians would ever dare to oppose his forces?” gives this particular account of the Lacedæmonians. (Herodotus, 7th Book.)

The whole system of Lacedæmonian policy was formed, not for conquest but defence. As often, therefore, as any neighbouring people were either oppressed, or under apprehensions of injury, Sparta was resorted to, as a sure and safe protectress. Alliances naturally court those in whom neither injustice nor violence are suspected. At Lacedæmon, therefore, where was no ambition to acquire territory, nor even the use of money allowed, there could be none of those dangers that have generally accompanied the intervention of foreign powers.

When you and I were examining the constitution of Sparta, I remember your conceit was, that the founder of the order of Le Trap has taken his plan from Lycurgus; and that the strictest devote of that order, does not impose more hardships on himself, than the Lacedæmonian institutes had made habitual to all the citizens of that republic.

You also told me, that you supposed men would naturally love that constitution of government *most*, which lays *least* restraint upon their inclinations and passions. At the first blush, I admit, it seems so; but history proves the reverse to be true. It is wonderful with what patience men submit, and with what constancy they adhere to laws, which maintain an equal liberty, and at the same time exclude licentiousness, luxury, and all temptations to extravagance and dissipation. Through a course of ages, during which the other states of Greece, (particularly Athens *) underwent

- * 1. Theseus reduced the *absolute* to a *limited* Monarchy.
- 2. The abolition of Monarchy upon the death of Codrus.
- 3. The code of laws enacted by Draco.
- 4. The new modes of government introduced by Solon.
- 5. The tyranny of Pisistratus.
- 6. The expulsion of Hippias, and Democracy restored.

7. The

derwent many revolutions, the constitution of Sparta remained entire*, without change or innovation, from its establishment by Lycurgus, till the first breach was made by Lyfander's introducing of gold and silver currency.

But, the writer, who is so anxious to prove the rectitude of taxing colonies, from the examples of the Free States of antiquity, uses the authority of Thucidides to shew the practice of Lacedæmon; and he quotes the following passage, as if translated from that great historian†: "In the beginning of the Peloponesian war, they (the Lacædemonians) demanded a sum of money, and 500 ships from the COLONIES of Sicily and Italy."

The sentence is mis-stated and mis-quoted grossly. I have inserted in a note the words of Thucidides‡. The term Colonies is never mentioned, nor any thing like it; the description is (τοῖς τὰ κείνων ἐλομένοις) "*they* who had entered into voluntary engagements with them." Nor does (Λακεδαιμονίους)

7. The reduction of the power of the Senate, by bringing public measures before the general assembly, without the previous consent of the Senate;—and also the reduction of the powers of the Areopagus;—both of which alterations were effected by Pericles.
8. The subversion of the Democracy, and establishment of a government of 400, upon the recall of Alcibiades.
9. The government of 400 changed for that of 5000.
10. The Democracy restored by Conon.

* Thuc. 12. 1.

† History of the Colonization of Free States, p. 47.

‡ Λακεδαιμονίους μὲν πρὸς ταῖς αὐτὰς ὑπαρχουσας ἐξ Ἰταλίας καὶ Σικελίας τοῖς τὰ κείνων ἐλομένοις, ναυς ἐπεταχθήσαν, ποιῆσαι κατὰ μέγεθος τῶν πόλεων ὡς εἰς τὸν παλαιὸν ἀνθρώπου πεντακασίων νεῶν ἰσομείων.

signify that particular state, but the whole Lacedæmonian league. The true construction of the sentence is this, "The constituent parties of the Lacedæmonian league proposed to raise a navy of 500 ships, besides what might be collected from their allies in Sicily and Italy."

But there was no specific requisition made from Italy and Sicily; nor does it appear that those states afforded any material assistance during the war. I believe I could shew that they sent none. Neither had the Lacedæmonians at any time a fleet that amounted to 500 sail; the Athenians always out-numbered them in shipping; but in the fourth year of the war, when they made their greatest effort, and when (as Thucydides particularly tells us) they had the largest fleet that Athens was ever mistress of, it then amounted to no more than 250 sail.

But so far were the Sicilian States from acknowledging allegiance or subjection, as colonies either of Sparta or Athens, that when the ambassadors of both nations came to ask their support against the Persians, they refused it, unless Gelon, their King, might be appointed commander in chief in the Grecian army*. The demand was refused, and the Sicilians stood neuter.

The resources on which Sparta depended were the quotas of men and money that she stipulated with her allies to furnish, in consideration of the protection they received. She also exacted contributions on the nations she conquered, during the progress, and at the end of wars.—And from this part of her conduct, there arises a remarkable proof of the danger of laying hands on the property of a free people, however reduced, and by long submission inured to oppression. I allude to an early period of the Lacedæmonian history, at the close of the first Messenian war.

* Herodotus, l. 7.

The Messenians being entirely subdued, and having yielded to such terms as their conquerors thought fit to impose, the chief article was, " That they should cultivate all their lands, and send half the produce " to Sparta." This grievous and slavish tribute was paid for thirty years together. At length their spirit broke forth; the Messenians renewed the war, rather than suffer this tax to be levied any more.—That war proved, from the variety of its disastrous events, from its duration and expence of blood, the severest contest that Sparta ever sustained.

But if there is a single circumstance to be deduced from the annals of Sparta, to justify the principle (even allowing that precedent *can* justify it) or prove the *fact*, of taxing colonies, it has not, after a diligent search, fallen within the compass of my discoveries.

Our next enquiry goes to Athens. In the mean time believe me constantly,

Your's, &c.

L E T T E R VII.

July 10, 1778.

S I R,

I Should be much at a loss to shew any better ground to claim a right of taxation over colonies from the example of Athens than that of Sparta.

The constitutional revenues of Athens consisted of the annual rents of public lands, the profits of mines, and the produce of woods; of taxes upon certain arts and handicraft trades; of a poll-tax upon aliens;—and for the expences of war, and on great emergencies, they raised the supplies within the year by a poll-tax on citizens, sojourners, and freed slaves. During the monarchy, the Kings levied a tenth part of every man's substance to maintain their state; but when royalty was abolished, that tax ceased to be raised in common, but was renewed on particular and pressing occasions.

These were the only taxes levied for the use and support of the Athenian State, till the 75th Olympiad, after the famous victories of Marathon, Plataea, Salamis, and Mycale, and after the retreat of Xerxes from Greece. A new fund of taxation was then increased. For,

Notwithstanding all the defeats of his innumerable armies, the Persian monarch could not give up the vain ambition of becoming the conqueror of Greece, and was actually preparing again to invade the country with an army not inferior, either in numbers or equipment, to that with which Xerxes had crossed the Hellespont. At this alarming crisis, it was proposed, that the Grecian States should form a bond of union for their common safety and defence. For this purpose, a joint fund was necessary, to procure
and

and maintain a fleet at sea; no single state being able of herself to supply ships enough to resist the naval force of Persia. The plan concerted was, for each confederate state to furnish a certain quota; and Sparta being still the leading power, the King and the magistrates of that city were to make the assessments, and the application of the revenue was to be entrusted to them.

But a concurrence of events happened, that turned the course of this arrangement from Lacedæmon to Athens.

In the progress of the Persian wars, the Spartans lost a great deal of their popularity and importance. The Asiatic Greeks had implored their assistance, but been denied it*. Even at the time of actual invasion, the Lacedæmonians were slow, irresolute, supine; whilst the Athenians were active, vigorous, and firm. The battle of Marathon was fought by the Athenians alone, the Lacedæmonians loitering on their march, on a pretence of waiting for the full of the moon†. Above all, the victory at Salamis, over the Persian fleet, confirmed to the Athenians the admiration and attachment of all Greece. Their glorious spirit, on that occasion, is indeed unparalleled. They withdrew their families from Athens; they at once abandoned their city, their houses, and possessions; they threw themselves on board their ships to fight their enemies at sea‡.

The two victories at Mycale, one at sea, the other at land, were obtained the same day as that of Salamis; but after those successes, the Lacedæmonians withdrew their forces, whilst the Athenians kept an army in the country, to secure the conquests already made, and to protect the inhabitants from future assaults.

* Herodotus, l. 1.

† Herodotus, l. 6.

‡ Herodotus, l. 3.

The Lacedæmonians also made a proposal, to compel the Asiatic Greeks to transplant themselves to Greece; but the Athenians undertook to protect them in their settlements*.

To these general causes of disgust were added personal considerations, that helped to alienate the confederates from Sparta, and attach them to Athens. Besides the national austerity of manners affected by the former, the particular behaviour of their King Pausanias was insolent and tyrannical; whilst the Athenian commanders, Aristides, Cimon, and Themistocles, were remarkable for their affability and courtesy. Plutarch says, "That Themistocles could never have vanquished his enemies by his courage, if he had not first gained the allies by his condescension."

The Spartans were not, indeed, forward of themselves to become the principals of this great alliance. The levying of taxes, and conducting affairs by dint of money, was new to Sparta; it was contrary to her policy, and repugnant to the first principles of her constitution. There was, moreover, a positive law of Lycurgus, which forbade an intercourse with foreign nations; which law they must inevitably break, were they to erect themselves into a maritime power.

But the treason of Pausanias settled the matter at once. He was convicted, and put to death for corresponding with the Persian government.

This accident determined the confederates to give their confidence to Aristides, the great statesman of Athens, so famed for his wisdom and virtue, and whose distinction was *Justice*. They elected him their treasurer, and authorized him, on his own judgment, to fix the particular sums that each state was to furnish.

* Diodorus Siculus, l. 11.

Thus was the power of *levying* taxes on dependent states acquired at Athens. It was a trust delegated, not to that *state*, but to a *man* of that state *. The powers assigned to the trust, did not extend to the disposal of the public money, but to the assessment only. Delos was the place appointed for their bank; there the confederates, by their representatives, were to assemble at stated times, to debate and decide on the expediency of measures, and the appropriation of their common fund †.

The conditions to which the confederates bound themselves, were nothing more than to revenge the injuries that Greece had suffered from the Persians, and to preserve the nations *free* from the barbarian yoke.

I am, &c.

* Ἡγούμενοι δὲ αὐτονομῶν το πρώτων ξυμμαχῶν καὶ ἀπο κοιῶν ξυνοδῶν βελευσίων. Thuc. l. i
Plutarch, in the life of Aristides, says, “Οἱ δ’ Ἕλληνες ἐπέλουν μὲν τινα καὶ Λακιδημονίων ἡγεμῶν ἀποφορᾶν εἰς τοὺς πολέμους ταχθῆναι δὲ βελομένοι κατὰ πολλὴν ἑκάστοις το μετρίον, ἤτησαντο παρὰ τῶν Ἀθηναίων Ἀριστίδην, καὶ προσεταξάν αὐτῷ.

† And Cornelius Nepos, in his Life of Aristides, has this passage: “Tum autem, et
“ intemperantia Pausaniæ ex Justitiâ Aristidis, factum est, ut omnes fere civitates Græciæ
“ ad Atheniensium societatem se applicarent; et adversus barbaros, hos duces sibi deli-
“ gerent. Ad classes ædificandas, ad exercitus comparandos, quantum pecuniæ quæque
“ civitas daret, Aristides electus est, qui constituerunt.”

LETTER

L E T T E R VIII.

July 30, 1778.

S I R,

WE are told by Thucidides, "that till after the confederacy among the Grecian states took place, Athens had no dependent states on whom she levied taxes, or to whom she prescribed laws*."

Taxation and confederacy, therefore, bear the same date; but the historian of Colonization of Free States, has either been misled himself, or attempted to mislead his readers, by confounding alliance with colonization. I think, that a recital of a few historical facts will convince you, that alliance *was*, and that colonization was *not* the principle on which the taxes in question were levied by the government of Athens. Let us only ask, Who the contracting parties were that bound themselves to pay taxes according to the assessments of Aristides?—They were, some of them, independent states of Greece, as the Messenians, Acarnanians, Platæans, &c. some of them were the colonies of independent states, as were Corcyra and Potidæa of Corinth, and Zacynthus of Achaia, (these certainly could not be taxed as the *colonies* of Athens.)

The others were the Asiatic Greeks, as the Samians, Chians, Lesbians, and others, who inhabited the islands in the Archipelago and the concurrent seas.

The islands had been peopled by emigrants from Greece many centuries before the æra of taxation; and in their early days became most of them considerable in trade and shipping†. In the different states, they had

* Thuc. l. i.

† Herodotus.

different forms of government; in some were *absolute*, in some *limited* monarchies, and in some of them republics. Their governments underwent many changes and revolutions; but, till they became the *allies* of Athens, none of them were subject to the controul of that republic.

The Greeks, on the continent of Asia, came originally, part from Peloponesus, part from Ionia.—The former claimed Sparta for their mother country; the latter, Athens. But a short account of their first settlements will make it clear, that the connection they bore with Athens was that of genealogy, not allegiance.

Indeed, I am unable to define allegiance in general terms, as relative to a colony and the mother country. If any conditions are annexed, I conceive they must either be expressed by charter, be settled by specific regulations, or have become prescriptive by usage. In no colony of *freedom* can I suppose the mother country to assume an active power over the property of its inhabitants; it would be a contradiction in terms. Where ever a colony has been planted under the sanction of its native government, has imported its laws, been nourished by its care, and protected by its hand, there is an undoubted propriety in making requisitions on one side, and an obligation to give assistance on the other. But time and circumstances can alone determine the reasonableness of the demand, and the duty of acquiescence.

There is also a distinction to be made betwixt *colonists* and *emigrants*. By the latter I understand any number of men, who, through choice or necessity, have quitted their native soil, taking the world before them, and fortune for their guide; but without owing any obligation or retaining any intercourse with the country they forsake. There is a passage in Thucydides which marks the distinction. It is this*, “The Egesteans of Sicily, being

* Thuc. l. 6.

“ of Ionian descent, applied for succour and protection from Athens, on
 “ the ground of their being an Athenian *colony*; but they were answered
 “ by Nicias (one of the best and wisest citizens that Athens ever bred,)
 “ That they were mere *emigrants*, and had therefore no right to claim
 “ protection as *colonists* *.”

Under the same predicament as those of Sicily, were the Ionians who were settled in Asia. They owed no allegiance, nor could Athens justify the exercise of sovereignty over them.

A short account of their emigration will set the matter clear. Theseus erected a pillar on the neck of the isthmus, to fix the boundaries of the two countries; Ionia was written on one side, and Peloponesus on the other †. Migrations from both countries were very frequent; but the causes were different, because the soils were of different kinds. The lands of Peloponesus (i. e. *within* the isthmus) were exceedingly fruitful, and therefore an alluring object to invaders; such invasions, as used formerly to happen in Britain, were very frequent there, and the landed property changed owners as often as bands of adventurers could collect themselves into a sufficient strength to dispossess the natives ‡.

But Ionia (the country *without* the isthmus) was rocky and barren, such as yielded no profit to invaders, and was therefore undisturbed by them.

But population increased exceedingly, both on account of trade and navigation, and the encouragement given foreigners to settle in Attica; so that the production of their lands, not being adequate to the consumption of the inhabitants, that emigration which from Peloponesus was compulsive, became voluntary from Ionia; the scarcity and dearth of

* Luc. l. 6.

† Herodotus.

‡ Thuc.

provisions prompting *them* to seek a residence where the necessities of life were more easily to be acquired. There were not less than forty colonies of these Ionians.

Pericles, in one of his orations, mentions it as a very honourable circumstance in the annals of his country, "That *their* ancestors had been for ever fixed in their native settlements*." But the frequent invasions of Peloponesus made such a change and rotation of possessors, that the inhabitants could not ascertain their genealogies; they were, therefore, looked upon as people of a spurious race.

The certainty of *their* origin made the Ionians proud of it; and wherever they went, they carried that pride along with them. A grasshopper was the Athenian crest; its constancy to the ground it springs from, being an emblem of their own immemorial residence. And the Ionians who lived in Asia, to distinguish themselves from other Græcians, had grasshoppers engraved on the clasps that bound their hair†. They built a magnificent temple, called it PAN-IONION, and excluded the other Greeks from joining in their worship‡. This separation gave rise to the distinction of Ionians and Dorians, which divided the Græcians into two parties, like the Guelphs and Ghibelines of Germany and Italy. In every one of their different settlements they kept up this distinction, and remained always, not only as a separate people, but hostile to each other§.

It is true, they were all careful to preserve the memory of their parent states, but there is not a trace of their acknowledging any dependence upon ancient Greece. The first settlements were made at a time, of which there are no records, long before Athens herself became a free state. They had lived at least five centuries as an independent people, when

* Thuc. l. 2.

† Herodotus, l. 1.

‡ Thuc. l. 1.

§ Thuc. l. 6.

Cræsus conquered, and made them pay the first tribute that was ever exacted from them. When Cræsus was himself conquered by Cyrus, the Asiatic Greeks, with this tribute on their estates, were assigned over to their new masters; but they revolted, and sent Ambassadors to implore the assistance of Sparta and of Athens; not as colonies, which was a claim not to have been omitted, if they had been entitled to it (but *κατα το συγγινες*) "because of their consanguinity."

The victories at Mycale restored their freedom, and exempted them, as they thought, from the imposition of all future tribute. It was not long after this event, when these Asiatic Greeks, Dorians as well as Ionians, became the allies of Athens, and agreed to be taxed by Aristides for their common defence.

The independent states of Greece, and those colonies of independent states that were parties to the treaty, as well as the terms of the treaty itself, have been already mentioned. And you can want no farther evidence to ground your opinion, whether these various states are to be considered as *allies*, uniting in defence of their liberty, or as *colonies*, subjecting themselves to arbitrary taxes.

I am afraid I have worn your patience by this long and dry deduction, yet there is another circumstance, which comes too near our present subject to be passed over.—Before the breaking out of the Peloponesian war, and among the causes that led to it, was a dispute betwixt Athens and Corinth, relative to Potidæa. Potidæa was a colony of Corinth; but being a party to the great confederacy with Athens, had paid her quota of taxes. The Athenians, who affected to treat their allies as their subjects, sent the Potidæans a mandate to demolish their walls, and expel the magistrates that were sent from Corinth*. Here the Corinthians interposed, and

* Thuc. l. 1.

resisted the mandate of the Athenians over *their* colony. But had taxation been deemed an inherent right in the mother country, Corinth would never have suffered that right above all others to have been exercised by Athens; though, as an ally, Potidæa might pay her proportion of the assessments, as adjusted by Aristides.

I think we may state this historical fact, as an irrefragable proof, that alliance *was*, and that colonization was *not*, the principle on which the taxes in question were levied (as I said before) by the government of Athens.

I am ever your's, &c.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R IX.

August 4, 1778.

S I R,

I HAVE heard the report you mention, that "The History of the Colonization of the Free States of Antiquity," was undertaken at the desire of a certain great character on our political stage, and that the historian has been magnificently rewarded. I neither know the fact, nor am anxious to enquire about it; it is the book, not the author, that we are scrutinizing.

I think, however, (as you do) that industry accursed, and those arts execrable, which we have seen so fatally employed in seducing the people of this devoted country to become partakers, and, in some degree, instruments of their country's ruin: for, I am persuaded, had not our ministers been seconded by that general zeal of much violence, but little knowledge, that of late appeared throughout the kingdom, they would not have been so forward to plunge their King, their country, and themselves, in a civil war, of which we feel the present effects with sorrow, and look to the future consequences with horror.

But there is a peculiar malignity in perverting the fountains of science to the purposes of national delusion. History is the best source of practical and useful knowledge; but if facts are untruly stated, and inferences unfairly drawn, history itself may become an insidious guide to error; it may gloss the weakest and most pernicious measures, with colours of sound policy; it may give to falsehood an air of truth; to folly and misrule, a fictitious sanction of wisdom and experience; and it may conceal tyranny under a mask of freedom. Is it then dealing fairly by our country, to tell us, what were the paths in which the Free States of Antiquity have trodden, and to mark them as the ways in which we ought to go, without informing

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us that those very paths led to slavery and destruction?—A party writer, of this description, follows, indeed, an example of great antiquity, even the first that was given to unhappy mortals; for he leads men to the tree of knowledge, to beguile them with its fruits into irremediable ruin.

But let us resume our temper. My wish is to amuse you, but to censure no man.

In the last letter I had the honour to receive from you, you seem at a loss to account for those many disturbances which the imposition of taxes has occasioned in the world.—As it affects nothing but property, and that not often in a great degree, you seem to think, that so much solicitude on this point marks a selfishness and narrowness of soul, that reflects no credit upon human nature.

A slight investigation of principles may, perhaps, incline you to a change of your opinion. For true it is, that in all ages, and in all countries, “freedom in property” has been held more sacred than freedom of person. A virtuous and firm man may be bold in exposing his own person to all it can suffer; but at the same time, esteem it his duty to keep in safety that property, on which the comfort and security of his family and posterity may depend. Many have been the discontents and tumults on account of taxes in England; but I do not recollect, that a rebellion ever arose from the pressures of military service. Thucidides, who abounds in lessons of philosophy, teaches us to account for it: “Men (says he) are always more ready to serve the public with their persons than their property; because their property, if they part with it, is gone for ever; but in regard to their persons, whilst their hope flatters them with safety, their spirit tells them, they shall acquire honour.”

Have you never observed, that too close a finger over the private purse, often brings its owner into contempt; but public thrift is considered as the prime virtue of a patriot?

I believe

I believe I had better bring an instance to explain my meaning. Should I ask you, whose is the military character that gives most lustre to the annals of Great Britain? you will answer, "To be sure the Duke of Marlborough's." But why do you, my friend, admire and revere the memory of a plain citizen, Mr. John Hampden, much above that of the Great Duke of Marlborough!—Perhaps your reason is, that his Grace was said to be remarkably tenacious of a *Groat**.—So was Mr. Hampden—But, in Mr. Hampden's *Groat* was included the tenure by which every Englishman, for himself and his posterity, was to hold his fortune in security. Mr. Hampden lost, first his liberty, and then his life; but with *his* *Groat*, he saved his country.

If many a page in the history of worldly interest and ambition did not prove the fact, it would be thought incredible, that, in a country of liberty, men can be found ready to promote measures that tend to destroy that property in equal laws which constitutes the best part of a free man's inheritance†. But whoever gains, and whoever enjoys, the emoluments of state, in consideration of supporting bad measures, and acting upon slavish principles, will still find his splendor checquered by the disesteem of his country; and whilst a spirit of liberty and sense of virtue remain, there is always danger that the womb of events may pour forth some hidden vengeance upon men, who injure and betray their country.

But, in the expedient of defraying expences at home by taxes abroad, there appears at first sight nothing unpopular. Nations, as well as indivi-

* Triumphant leaders, at an army's head,
Hemmed round with glories, pilfer cloth and bread;
As meanly pilfer as they bravely fought,
Now save a nation, and now save—a GROAT.

POPE.

† Major hæreditas a jure quam a parentibus.

duals,

duals, are driven headlong by ambition. In France, the enthusiasm was *POUR LE GRAND MONARQUE*. In free states, that spirit carries more reason; because the people being themselves constituent parts of government, each particular person feels *himself* exalted in the elevation of his country; and if the ends proposed, correspond with the public voice, means are not scrupulously weighed. The Athenians were not the only free people, who thought * every thing just which pleased them, and every thing, by which their state was profited, *honourable*.

The check to public ambition is *expence*. Public spirit recoils, and the feelings of self-interest return as soon as men find that speculative plans of national greatness cannot be pursued but with the diminution of their own private property. But if a statesman can open the prospect of some distant country, on which he can throw the maintenance of expensive establishments, and lighten the weight of taxes at home, he cannot flatter himself with a fairer title to the strongest support, and to the warmest wishes of the public.

But before he puts his plan in execution, he will do well to learn a little of that philosophy which (Lord Bolingbroke says) "History teaches by examples." In that school he may be taught, that it is the nature of mankind to be more impatient of *legislative injustice*, than of *lawless violence*. Men submit to the one as to the strokes of Heaven, against which reasoning is vain, and defence impracticable. But the injustice which flows from council and deliberation, bears and works hard upon the reason; every minute's reflection inspires new ideas of revolt; submission is disgrace, and resistance duty.

It is true, that arbitrary measures are generally undertaken on a presumption of acquiescence, (though an involuntary one) or incapacity of resistance. For, when a regular plan is once formed to over-turn a free

* Thuc.

constitution, the first point will be to establish some principle of despotic power; but with great care to make the yoke appear as easy, and the burden as light as possible. It is then assumed, that for a trifling consideration, no man will expose himself to the personal dangers of such resistance, as government will be sure to punish with the utmost rigour. This was the speculation of King Charles the First; but, *principiis obsta* was the sentiment of Mr. Hampden.

Persuasion to pursue a favourite object has quick access; and the love of power is the instance in which it is best received. One cannot, therefore, wonder that so many princes have been induced to believe that, when the sword and the purse are both in their hands, they never can be foiled by an unarmed and an unwealthy people. But history can inform them, how spirit and industry may be opposed to insolence and power. And though a subordinate people may of themselves be unable to make successful opposition, yet they may find others either oppressed, or under fears of oppression, who will make a common cause in struggling for their common redemption.

It is, moreover, the lot of overbearing governments to raise jealousies and apprehensions every where, and to make even neutral states their enemies. They not only provoke war, but *justify* it.

The invasion of a country, and the attempt to *enslave a free people*, are in themselves violations of the laws of nations; nor is it a breach of any subsisting treaties for a foreign power to assist, either in repelling an invasion, or in defending a free people whose liberties are attacked.

“ Si alieni regni invasor, vel liberi populi oppressor bello appetatur,
“ nihil eo fiet contra fœdus.” (Grotius.)

I flatter myself, therefore, that you will not charge me with holding an unreasonable opinion, if I confess how strongly I am impressed with a
M persuasion

persuasion of the danger even of claiming any power over the property of a free people. Because the temptations to use that power are forcible, and the use of it is sure to provoke resistance.

If you question my arguments, I must refer to history for proofs.

In the mean time believe me ever

Your's, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R X.

August 12, 1778.

S I R,

THE taxes which the Athenians raised on the confederate states, being the means by which they obtained precedence in Greece, and by which also the confederates were at length not only alienated, but driven to join their natural enemies in the demolition of a power that was never employed but to injure and oppress them, perhaps you will not think a few minutes mis-spent in attending to the circumstances that led to that eventful measure; what the state of parties, and who the principal men were that preceded the administration of Pericles; who first carried taxation far beyond the original intention; who claimed it as a right, and enforced it by the sword.

Miltiades, whose victory at Marathon both saved Greece, and led to the deliverance of many nations from the Persian yoke, did not long survive his glorious conquest. He undertook an expedition against the Parians for the purpose of levying contributions, which proved unsuccessful, and he received a mortal wound. The Athenians, who had seen him vanquish millions of Medes and Persians, could impute his defeat at Paros to no motive but treachery, and embittered his last moments by an ungrateful, cruel persecution; having thrown him into a prison, where he died.

Parties ran high at this period. Aristides and Themistocles divided the affections of the people; the former headed the nobles, the latter the commons. They were men of different natures, and discordant habits: had contracted an early hatred to each other, which never intermitted, except when the public service required their union; and then they had the honour and virtue to act together with the utmost cordiality. Themistocles

was

was intent on raising money, and totally indifferent about the means ; for, courting popularity as the instrument of his ambition, his expences became boundless in feasts, diversions, and every species of magnificence and splendour, to gain the love, and attract the admiration of the vulgar citizens.

But Aristides seemed as studious to avoid popularity, as his rival to obtain it ; poverty was not only his habit, but his choice*. But, if we credit Plutarch, justice itself was not to be trusted with the property of foreign states ; for he says, that Aristides took part of the treasure from Delos, and applied it to the separate use of Athens, without the authority of the other confederates.

I know you are an admirer of Plutarch, but will you not admit that he was a little too fond of embellishing his biography with anecdotes which he picked from Aristophanes and other geniuses, that were little better than the scandalous chroniclers of their day ? The tenor of all respectable history shews the contrary. The confederates were so elated with seeing a great mass of strength collected for their common defence, and were so perfectly satisfied with the administration of their treasurer, that, " they called it " the return of Saturn's reign, and the halcyon days of Greece." There

* Callias, who was the richest man in Athens, was questioned by the Areopagus for some blemishes in his life and character. Among other articles, he was accused of covetousness and ingratitude ; for that he suffered Aristides, who was his relation and friend, to want the common necessaries of life. Aristides appeared in his defence, and induced the Court to acquit him, on giving testimony that he (Callias) frequently had offered him large sums of money, which he (Aristides) constantly refused. The great commands he bore, and the lucrative employments he had filled, particularly that of treasurer and pay-master of all Greece, certainly gave him opportunities to have amassed as much wealth as he had pleased ; but he died so poor, that the Senate paid his funeral expences, and made a provision for his children.

The irreparable loss which Great Britain sustained in the death of the Earl of Chatham, and the respect shewn by Parliament to his name and family, have brought the virtues of Aristides much into remembrance and recent conversation.

is likewise preserved a sarcastical Bon Mot of Themistocles, which furnishes decisive evidence on this point; for, hearing him praised for the strict guard he kept on this very treasure, he (Themistocles) said "that all the merit of Aristides was that of a strong box."

Themistocles himself might probably look with a greedy eye on the repository at Delos. He was too true an Athenian to scruple any thing that tended to the aggrandizement of Athens. His talent was penetration. "He had an eye (it was said) that could look into the womb of events." To his genius and foresight the Athenians owed their *wooden walls*. But he undertook his great naval system much against the inclination of the people, who complained bitterly "of his taking away the spear and the shield, and "binding them to the bank and the oar." A navy being not a natural but a purchased strength, he perceived the necessity of enlarging the public revenue, and bringing foreign supplies into the Exchequer. With this view he attacked Andros, telling the people, "he brought two powerful "goddesses, Persuasion and Force." The Andrians replied, they had two "goddesses of equal power to oppose them, Poverty and Impossibility." Finding them too well prepared for their defence, Themistocles retired from Andros, as Miltiades had done from Paros.

Is it possible to refrain from making a remark on these events? Two great men, one of whom had defeated the innumerable forces of Xerxes; the other, not only conquered the fleets of Persia, but wrested from that vast empire the dominion of the sea, and fixed it in his own country; yet these mighty conquerors were foiled by the small forces of two petty states, who had the resolution to stand boldly forth in defence of their liberty and property. The idea is finely expressed by Tacitus, when he says,

"Acrior Ifacidarum regno Germanorum libertas."

Aristides and Themistocles both died about the same time; and Cimon, the son of Miltiades, succeeded to the conduct of affairs, civil and military. He gave an early proof of his piety and humanity, by redeeming his father's corpse at the expence of his own liberty. In justice and integrity, he was not inferior to Aristides; in his military conduct, he pursued the tract of Themistocles. He was the person who made the offering of a bridle and a buckler at the altar of Diana; signifying, that land-armies were no longer to be regarded; and after performing that ceremony, he headed the youth of Athens when they entered on board the fleet to meet the Persians at Salamis.

The object of his administration was to encrease the navy, and, as conducive to that end, augment the public revenue. The confederates were bound by their compact to keep up a standing force, some of horse, some of foot, others of shipping. This was felt by many of them as a grievous burden, especially when their fears from Persia were at an end; but Cimon discharged as many of them as pleased, on their paying certain sums in ready money to the treasury at Athens, which were less than their proportions of the assessments as fixed by Aristides. Out of this fund, he purchased ships; and thus, without violence or injustice, he drew in the confederates to contribute largely towards the augmentation of the maritime strength of Athens. This was the first deviation from the original compact; and took place about ten years after the time when Aristides was made treasurer of Greece.

Cimon was supplanted in his influence and power by Pericles; after which, though he continued to be commander in chief, and conducted several glorious enterprizes, he never interfered in the civil government of Athens.

On the secession of Cimon, the principal men of the city chose Thucydides to counteract the designs of Pericles. There commenced a regular division of the two parties; one stiling themselves the *many*, the other the *few*.

few. But we find of how little weight the probity and merit of the one proved, in competition with the powers of interest and passion, by which Pericles led the people; and with no pretensions but those of a Demagogue, assumed the authority of an actual monarch*.

I am your's, &c.

* Συγκρίνέτε το λόγον μὲν Δημοκρατίας, ἵσχυον δὲ, ἐν τῷ πρώτῳ ἀδελφεῖ ἀρχόντι.

L E T T E R XI.

August 31, 1778.

S I R,

YOU wonder at my giving such a name as DEMAGOGUE to the great Pericles. But the term was peculiar to Athens. We misunderstand it *here*. The literal construction of the word is, *A Leader of the People*; but as the supreme powers of the state, both legislative and executive, were vested in the people of Athens, in the Leaders of the People *there* were comprehended the Leaders of the State.

But the word Demagogue bears a different sense in different places. Aristotle says, that “ In a Democracy, it is he who flatters the people ; “ in a Monarchy, it is he who flatters the Prince ; for flattery is the business of a King’s Demagogue. Tyrants, therefore, love to be served “ by the very worst of men ; they delight in servility, and their measures “ require an implicit obedience, in which men of liberal spirits cannot “ bear to be employed *.”

If you then, my friend, should ever use the word Demagogue, as Aristotle has defined it, you can apply it to such persons only as make a pernicious use of their authority in our public Councils. The Demagogues of England are they who deceive the King, mislead the Parliament, enrich themselves, and undo their country. Whether any such Demagogues are now to be found, either in the cabinet of the King, or in the great depart-

* Έστι γὰρ ὁ Δημαγωγὸς τὴν δὴμὸν κολαξίᾳ· παρὰ δὲ τοῖς τυράννοις, οἱ ταπεινὰς ὁμιλοῦντες. Ὅπῃ ἐστὶν ἔργον κολακίας. Καὶ γὰρ διὰ τὸ τοιοῦτον πονηροφίλον ἢ τυραννίς. Κολακιστοὶ γὰρ χαιροῦσι τὸ τοιοῦτον ὅσον εἰς πείσθησιν φρονήματα ἔχον ἐλευθέρων.
Aristot. Polit. l. 5, c. 120.

ments of the law, or in the two Houses of Parliament, you, who live *in* the world, know better than I who live *out* of it. All I learn is from news-papers; and if they are to be credited, I see that pains are taken to throw all miscarriages and disappointments on those Admirals and Generals who are employed in the public service. This was the constant practice of the Demagogues at Athens, to which many a gallant and brave officer fell a sacrifice *.

But let us resume our subject, and say a word or two of the state and temper of the Athenian people.

The commencement of their power may properly be dated from the time when Theseus abridged the Royal Prerogatives. The Monarchy then became of so little consequence, that it was abolished in compliment to the memory of Codrus, the last King of Athens, who made a voluntary sacrifice of his life to serve his country. Every subsequent change was in favour of popular government.

The Democracy was interrupted by the tyranny of Pisistratus, which in his person and family continued sixty-eight years, but ended in a revolution, that not only restored the people to their liberty and importance, but invested them with despotic power over every eminent and meritorious person (for such only were the objects of it). This was the Ostracism; by which law every man was doomed to ten years banishment, on whom six thousand citizens agreed to pronounce the sentence, without any

* Among these were Miltiades, Cimon, Themistocles, and many others. No less than six of ten Admirals, who obtained the victory at Arginusæ, were put to death on the information of one of their colleagues, who, by his own neglect, had occasioned the very accident with which he charged the others. His name was Theramenes, an inferior Demagogue, at that time the creature of Critias, and other leading Demagogues, who were jealous of the meritorious Admirals. It is remarkable that, not many years after, Theramenes himself underwent the sentence of death, by poison, at the instance of this very Critias.

cause or allegation, and with no more ceremony than writing the devoted name on a shell, and throwing it into the ballot-box.

By the spur of occasion men are driven to strange expedients ; and the Ostracism was established to prevent the success of those popular arts by which Pisistratus acquired the sovereignty.

But there was no tyranny, which the Athenians dreaded more than the four Aristocratic government of Sparta ; the Lacedæmonians (who were intent on planting it wherever they could) attempted to impose that Constitution upon Athens, amidst the confusion that accompanied the expulsion of the Pisistratidæ. For this reason, not only the popular virtues of humanity and courtesy, but also stern and rigid integrity, became an object of their jealousy and fear. Themistocles was banished, because he was affable and profuse ; Aristides, because he was inflexibly just ; and Cimon, because he was an admirer of Spartan virtue.

To that insolence of power which the Ostracism had created, was added an excess of national pride that arose, first, from the glory the Athenian name had acquired in the Persian wars, and afterwards from her acknowledged superiority over the rest of Greece.

This, as well as I can inform myself, was the disposition of the Athenian people, when Pericles began to attract their notice.

His first object was to raise the authority of the people above that of the Senate ; concluding rightly, that they would be sure to entrust him with the power, which he put into their hands.

In his regulations of police, he provided every thing to supply the wants, and contribute to the pleasures of the people. To this use and purpose he applied the taxes that were paid by the confederates and allies of Athens. One of the first acts of his administration, was to remove the treasure from
Delos

Delos to Athens. He then encreased the assessments, and levied them with extreme rigour*. Out of this fund he built temples, and other edifices, for the ornament of the city; he erected theatres, some for music, some for the drama, and others for all kinds of public entertainments; in all which he gave the citizens an actual property, there being galleries reserved for them; and each had a right to demand, at the treasury, the price of a seat on every day of exhibition. Out of the same stock, Pericles allotted pensions to the poor citizens; and a stated allowance for their attendance on general assemblies, and all other public business.

The allies, you may be sure, were not easy at seeing the taxes, which they consented to pay for their general protection, applied to the single purpose of supporting a minister's power by corruption, and by largesses bestowed on those who were necessary to uphold his influence. They remonstrated against the breach of trust, and undue application of their property; but Pericles, in a general assembly of the people, answered them, "That the money was not theirs who gave, but theirs to whom it was given; that the confederates had all agreed to be taxed, on condition the Athenians would keep them free from the barbarian yoke, and as long as that condition was fulfilled, they had no right to enquire into disbursements†."

The Carians, indeed, refused to pay the tax, and put Lyficles to death, with all his attendants, who were sent to collect it‡. But the rest were obliged to submit; for, upon the least expression of reluctance, Pericles sent an armed force, not only to exact the tribute, but to new model their

* He raised the assessments from 460 to 600 talents. Cleon, and the other succeeding Demagogues advanced them to 1500.

† Plutarch. Life of Pericles.

‡ Thuc. l. 3.

Constitutions, and accept such forms of government, as were most likely to make them subservient to the legislature of Athens *.

Too late then did the confederates see and feel, that states which are constituted in freedom, are not therefore to be entrusted with an arbitrary power over the property of others; and that by throwing off the Persian yoke, they had only changed masters; and had found the Athenian Demagogues not less despotic, but more *subtle* tyrants than the Eastern Emperors †.

I am, &c.

* Αδύνατοι δὲ οντες καθ' ἑν γινόμενοι διὰ πολυψηφίας ἀμυνασθαι, οἱ ξυμμαχοὶ ἐδαλώθησαν.

Thuc. 1. 3.

† Οἱ δ', ἐπὶ δισπότῃ μεταβολῇ, ἐκ ἀξυνετωτέρων, κακοξυνετωτέρων δὲ.

Thuc. 1. 6.

L E T T E R XII.

September 14, 1778.

S I R,

THE letter you receive by this post being mere biography, I desire you, unless it comes in an idle hour, not to read it. But as memoirs of famous men are always interesting, and as motives can only be discerned by actions, it seems not quite immaterial to give you as many particulars as may serve to shew the principles that governed the political and moral conduct of that person, who established an arbitrary taxation over free states, by the government of Athens.

As far then as my little discernment goes, private ambition was the single principle that Pericles ever knew. All his virtues and all his vices were subservient to that end. Popularity was the only possible means to obtain it. But he had the task not only of achieving great actions to attract the admiration of his fellow subjects; he had not only their love to acquire, by administering, as he did, to their pleasures and their wants, but he had the still greater difficulty of guarding against the jealousies and humours of the most irritable and most suspicious people upon earth. Yet such was his wonderful dexterity and attention, that, with no authority but that of personal influence, he governed, like an absolute monarch, those capricious, high-spirited republicans, for forty years together.

His tutor was Anaxagoras, who held the first rank in philosophy and learning. The chief business of schools then was, to investigate those se-

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He was thought to bear a striking resemblance to Pisistratus; and this accident alone had raised many an unfavourable idea of him. But he knew the nature of jealousy; and though it is apt to take the slightest incidents for irrefragable proofs, yet without some ground of fact, it seldom proceeds to action. That he might not, therefore, be suspected of resembling Pisistratus in his designs, as well as his person, by courting the people, in order to enslave them, he addicted himself to a reclusive and solitary life. His domestic establishment was mean, and so uncomfortable, as to be complained of by his own family. Of all the diversions he procured for others, he partook of none himself. No hospitality at home; no sociability abroad.

In this habit of seclusion, he had the further advantage of avoiding both the disgust that silence creates, and those invidious remarks and warpings that illiberal companions are apt to make on the expressions and behaviour of distinguished persons in their familiar conversations. But that he might raise no prejudices by a constructive affectation of Spartan manners, he made them the constant topics of his contempt and ridicule. Whatever was applauded at Lacedæmon, he exploded; and what was prohibited, he patronized, particularly the reception of foreigners, and encouragement of public entertainments.

He taught the citizens to be luxurious from principle, as well as inclination; that pleasure was a vital part of liberty; and the certainty of enjoying it, under the sanction of benevolent laws, inspired them to defend their happy Constitution with double spirit and vigour. He contrasted the noble ardour with which the Athenians *rushed*, against the slow mechanic pace with which the Spartans were moved on to battle; assuring his countrymen

trymen of victory, as often as their armies met ; because the courage of the one was technical, the other natural *.

Such was his care to avoid all appearances of desiring the favour of Sparta, that, on the invasion of Attica, he gave his lands to the public, in case they were spared by the enemy. (An event that was probable to have happened on account of some hospitality and personal friendship that subsisted between him and Archidamus, the Spartan King.)

Forestalling and regrating were not unknown, but very unpopular, in those times. Pericles had all the produce of his estates brought to the public market, and sold at a certain moderate price, at all seasons, near his own house, with great care to let the people know whom the property belonged to.

Though he had great personal courage, yet he used more caution in the field than was agreeable to the impetuous spirit of the Athenians. But even this circumstance he turned to his advantage, by telling them continually, “ + that spirits like theirs ought to be immortal, and he would do “ all that lay in his power to make them so.”

In affairs of state, Pericles never yielded to the opinions of the people, but with all the powers of eloquence impressed his own. When they were insolent, he rebuked ; when they desponded, he animated them. The vigour of his administration kept their spirits alert, whilst his own disinterestedness, and unbroken abstinence from all lucrative emoluments, gave such entire credit to his professions, that the citizens looked upon him as the protector of their liberty, and sole guardian of the state.

* Thuc. l. 2.

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† Plut.

Pericles has been much extolled for his love of liberty; but they who attribute that merit, do not mark the line betwixt liberty and licentiousness. For to obtain popular favour, he threw down those constitutional barriers which Solon instituted, as a balance betwixt the power of the great, and the due subordination of the people.

That great legislator found the Athenians immersed in licentiousness, and the state in anarchy. To establish order and good government, he made two regulations; one in the state, the other in the law. He appointed a Senate of four hundred, without whose previous consent no measure could be proposed to the General Assembly, and who had the direction of public affairs, with the appointment of all officers, civil and military. He judged this a proper medium, to give deliberation and execution to the Senate, leaving in the citizens at large a right to dissent and to affirm; that no law, no tax, no military service, might be opposed without their own consent.

Solon's other regulation was to new model, if not institute, the powers of the Areopagus. They who had filled the high office of Archon, became of course Judges of this court; their number therefore was indefinite. The jurisdiction went much further than our old Star Chamber; for it had cognizance not only of such actual offences as no law comprehended, but extended even to the vices of the heart, such as ingratitude; impiety, calumny, malevolence, &c. Though the powers of this court were excessive, yet the rank and integrity of the Judges, and the wisdom and justice of all their decrees, made the tribunal venerable, and its judgments implicitly obeyed.

Pericles, through the contrivance of one Ephialtes, an inferior Demagogue, overturned both these institutions.

When any citizen was condemned by the Areopagus, he advised an appeal to the people, and took care always to get the decree reversed. By
this

this practice, the authority of the Areopagus fell into decay, and the people were freed from their fears of that awful judicature.

In the next place, he brought all military arrangements before the General Assemblies in the first instance, without the previous vote of the Senate, according to Solon's law.

Having made these sacrifices of the Constitution to popularity, the citizens appointed him to every important command, and intrusted him with the conduct of affairs, civil and military, during the remainder of his life. And he approved himself not only a great minister, but an able and successful commander, both at sea and land. It does not, however, appear, that he was guided by any true spirit of patriotism; for he would rather have seen the most important service defeated, than that another person should derive credit from it. Cimon, when under sentence of the Ostracism, came and offered his assistance at the battle of Tanagra, but was rejected by the management of Pericles, as being outlawed for his supposed affection to Sparta. The Spartans were victorious; but the friends of Cimon, to prove, as it were, *his* fidelity by their own, engaged in a body, and rushed upon danger with such avidity, that they were killed to a man. This event made an impression on the Athenians, and they recalled Cimon from banishment to command their forces; but he made an agreement with Pericles not to interfere with civil affairs.

Some years afterwards, when the son of Cimon was appointed to a command, lest the name and family of that great man should again rise into estimation, he stinted him in his equipments, so that the expedition failed. He then took the command himself, with adequate supplies, and succeeded.

He valued himself so much upon his humanity, that in his last moments, when his friends thought him insensible, were lamenting over him, and reciting the splendid actions of his life, he raised himself up to tell them,

Q

“ that

“ that they had forgot to mention that which did most real honour, and
 “ now gave him the greatest comfort ; which was, that no citizen had ever
 “ put on mourning on his account.”

It is true that he never caused the death of any citizen, but was still guilty of great cruelty and tyranny. For to bring his system of governing by corruption within the bounds of practicability, and because the citizens were too numerous to be pensioned and gratified out of the fund of taxes, which he exacted from foreign states, he, therefore, procured an *ex post facto* law, to disfranchise all persons who were not of Athenian descent, by the mother's as well as the father's side. By this law, five thousand persons, some of noble birth and large property, were deprived of their freedom ; and that they might not raise discontents within the city, were all sold out for slaves.

It was remarkable (may I call it providential?) that all the children he had by his Athenian wife, died of the plague. To legitimate his children by Aspasia, who was a Milesian, he got this law repealed. And a son, whom he called after his own name, being appointed, in consequence of that repeal, to a command in the army, was condemned for his behaviour at Arginusæ, and suffered death by the hands of an executioner.

Nor does it appear, that he had much milk of human kindness ; for he suffered his tutor, Anaxagoras, in extreme old age, to be so destitute, that he took a resolution to starve himself. Pericles came to dissuade him from that resolution ; but the poor old man asked him, “ How a lamp
 “ could burn without oil ?”

Nor does his integrity appear in a favourable light from this circumstance : Alcibiades, one day finding him in perplexity and distress, because he could not account for the public money, advised him, “ to busy
 “ the people's minds with something else, that they might not think of
 “ bringing

“ bringing him to any account at all.” On this ground he provoked the Pelopenesian war, which ended in the ruin of his country.

The memory of Pericles has received great advantage from the silence of Thucidides, who mentions him always with respect, and imputes no ill to him. Commentators, therefore, have concluded the charges against him are not well founded. But Thucidides and he were personal enemies and rivals; an ingenuous and attentive observer will, therefore, find much more cause to admire the delicacy of that great historian, than deny the facts which his history confirms, though the actor is not named.

Another apology for the character of Pericles, arises from a comparison with the persons who succeeded him. The regular succession of heroes and of patriots ended with Cimon. The Demagogues, after Pericles, governed with as little wisdom as honesty. But was not Pericles himself the cause that virtue and power became incompatible? The Ostracism was in use about ninety years. During that time scarce one great man escaped it. As the Roman Emperors exterminated virtue, because virtue is in its nature hostile and formidable to tyranny; at Athens, transcendent virtue was dreaded, lest it should attract too much influence to be consistent with Democracy. But still there was no foul block in the road to distinction; and if a great man was banished, he carried his glory untarnished to his place of exile. But Pericles made it impossible to attain power by any means, except corruption, and such base appliances as men of noble natures could not submit to.

I must not close my account of Pericles, without introducing Aspasia: She was the most remarkable woman that any age or country has produced. She was first the mistress, afterwards the wife of Pericles, and had a decisive influence over every action, both of his public and private life. She instructed him in philosophy, politics, and oratory. That masterpiece of eloquence, which he pronounced at the funeral of those who were killed in the Samian war, was her composition. Her house was the resort
of

of all who were, and who affected to be thought, of taste and literature. Even Socrates took a pride in her information. But, in all the conduct of Pericles, there is something that marks the genius of the woman. His plans were calculated for brilliancy, not solidity. He neither led the citizens, nor governed the allies, by the stable principles of justice, integrity, and liberty ; but by fear, interest, and artifice. Principles which may lead to absolute, but short-lived, power, and which sow the never-failing seeds of discord and dissolution.

The Athenian Empire survived Pericles but twenty-four years.

I am your's, &c.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R XIII.

September 21, 1778.

S I R,

IF I was writing, not to my particular friend, but to the world at large, it would appear ridiculous to keep up a dispute now the object of it is abandoned. The historian of the Colonization of Free States recommends it to our Ministers *, by all means to maintain a standing army in America, in order to keep our rebellious colonies in subjection. "For, he adds, "the exemplary punishments inflicted on the colonies of Samos and Lesbos "evince, that these ancient states scrupled not to employ much severer "chastisements than the maintenance of a standing army."

A people over whom a standing army is kept for the purpose of chastisement, are in actual slavery. What severer punishment can be inflicted on a free people, I know not; nor will I ask, how or where this standing army is to be kept! But, is it not a little out of date to be exhorting our Ministers *now* to inflict that sort of *chastisement* (lenient as it may seem in *their* ideas) upon the Americans; because it appears that his Majesty has been advised to submit to *Congress* the direction of all military arrangements in America? † And a more compleat acknowledgment of the *sovereignty* of Congress cannot be made, than resigning the power of the sword into their hands.

But, in proceeding upon our line of literary discussion, I wish to ask the learned writer, how Samos and Lesbos came to be colonies of Athens?

* History of the Colonization of the Free States of Antiquity, p. 141.

† See the Commissioners letter to the Congress.

There is no authentic account of the establishment of these islands; but, according to tradition, the first settlers in both of them were Dorians; so that we have not the shallow pretence of genealogy to call them *colonies of Athens*. But, the *exemplary punishments* that he mentions may be worth a remark.

The Samians were engaged in a war with the Milesians about the right which each claimed to a city called Priene. Pericles, on this occasion acted in consistency with his own great plan of making Athens the sole maritime power of Greece. To that end, it was essential to reduce such states as were able to contend with her at sea; and it was an obvious policy to support the weaker (as Miletus was) against the stronger party. Polycrates, the famous King of Samos, had formerly disputed the dominion of the sea with the Persian Emperor*; and at this time the naval strength of Samos was not much inferior to that of Athens†. Pericles, therefore, judged, that by joining the Athenian to the Milesian fleet, the Samians would be soon overpowered. The event confirmed his speculation. The Samians, after a resolute defence, capitulated. Pericles changed the government from an Oligarchy to a Democracy‡; and to prevent any attempt to restore the Constitution, he carried off fifty citizens of the best distinction and property, and ordered them to be detained as hostages in the island of Lemnos. In regret for the loss of so many valuable citizens, to restore them to their liberty and country, and to regain their own legal government, the Samians renewed the war. But Pericles

* Herodotus.

† Thuc.

‡ It was the policy of Pericles, wherever he extended the power of Athens, to plant Democracies. By this means he attached the bulk of the people; as they would naturally follow those, who not only gave them rank and importance, but who were always ready to support them in it. Division was a certain consequence of this project; and where it grew to sedition and bloodshed, the states rendered themselves too weak to contend with Athens. These innovations occasioned many horrid scenes of confusion and massacre, particularly at Samos, Corcyra, Thebes, and Argos.

again attacked them, reduced the city by storm; and then erased the walls, seized all their shipping, compelled them to pay a great sum in specie, and settle the regular payment of a productive tax in future.

Never did the Athenians exult more, than in seeing that rival state reduced, her navy brought into their own ports, and a great accession to their national revenue. Pericles was at the height of popularity and fame; the Senate crowned him with laurels, and the ladies adorned him with garlands and ribbands; only Elpinice, the sister of Cimon, (a lady whose name is often mentioned in Athenian history) whilst the others were applauding and caressing, told him, "That when her brother triumphed, it was over tyrants; but he (Pericles) triumphed in the destruction of freemen; men of the same blood, united in the same cause of liberty with themselves. You have enslaved (she said) the very people whom Cimon redeemed from tyranny; and whose freedom it was his glory to strengthen and defend*."——But the ministerial writer calls this proceeding *exemplary*; and if you please, we will go to his other example, which is that of Lesbos.

The Athenians had levied no taxes upon Lesbos. She had always kept ten ships in readiness to act for the common service of the confederates. But when Athens first opened her plan for enslaving Greece, the Lesbians discovered an inclination to revolt, and entered into a correspondence with Sparta; but, not meeting with sufficient encouragement, were willing to desist. The Athenians, being apprized of their designs, resolved to be before-hand with them, and began the attack. They sent a fleet to block up their ports. The Lesbians were now obliged to stand on their defence. A general confederacy was already formed, under the guidance of Sparta, to support the freedom of Greece against the usurpations and tyranny of Athens. The Deputies of each state were assembled at Lacedæmon; and

* Plutarch.

the Lesbians sent their ambassadors to state the causes of their revolt, to desire admittance into the alliance with Sparta, and share the general protection. The ambassador alledged, " that the Lesbians had entered into
 " the Athenian confederacy, not with an intent to enslave the rest of
 " Greece to Athens, but to deliver Greece for ever from the barbarian
 " yoke. To this one condition, the contracting parties were all bound by
 " a specific oath. But, except themselves and the Chians, the rest of the
 " confederates were all enslaved by Athens. That till Sparta held out
 " her protecting hand, there was no prospect of redress; for they were too
 " distant from each other to unite in any probable system of defence,
 " especially as the taxes imposed by Athens had bereft them of their
 " means. These taxes had enabled Athens to pursue her dangerous and
 " ambitious projects; that the great revenues which Lesbos would yield
 " might enable her to compleat the reduction of all Greece, and Sparta
 " herself be exposed to the utmost danger. They, therefore, most ardently
 " desired to unite with Sparta, to support the cause of liberty and
 " justice; for, as long as they continued in alliance with the Athenians,
 " they must be considered as instruments in their hands to rivet the chains
 " of slavery upon others, whose freedom they were bound by the most
 " solemn obligations to defend *."

The favoured author, whom we are criticising, ascribes to the Lesbians the same spirit of faction and rebellion which (he says) governs the Americans †. I will not touch upon the parallel. But, in the great Congress which was assembled at Sparta, for the glorious purpose of protecting freedom, the motives which these Lesbians assigned for their conduct were fully approved ‡. They were admitted into the general confederacy, and assured of all possible protection. Unhappily, the Spartans were not so

* Thuc.

† History of the Free States of Antiquity, p. 128.

‡ Thuc.

well prepared to *defend*, as the Athenians to *attack* the Lesbians. They were defeated, and obliged to surrender at discretion.

Cleon, who succeeded Pericles, was at this time chief Demagogue at Athens. On the surrender of Mitylene (the capital of Lesbos) he procured a decree, "That all the males should be put to death, and the women and children sold for slaves." A few minutes intervened betwixt the respite, and the intended execution of this bloody law *. But Paches (the admiral who commanded at Lesbos) had already sent a thousand of the best and noblest citizens, who had been most active in inciting the people to resistance, as prisoners to Athens. There these thousand persons underwent a public execution. In all the tragic drama, there is no representation that inspires compassion and horror more than the picture which Thucydides has drawn of the sufferings of the Mityleneans, in the cause of liberty and virtue.

I hope this long letter will find you in an idle hour; but I have been the more correct in my relation of these events at Samos and Lesbos, because they are pointed out to the good people of England as *exemplary* punishments for disobedient colonies †.

I cannot help adding one event more, as it is so parallel to the others, which is, the tragical fate of Melos. The establishment of that republic was as singular as its end was lamentable. A regiment of soldiers that came from Tænaros had distinguished themselves in the Spartan service. They were received into the city as denizens, and had mansions allotted

* Diodatus, in a very eloquent oration, opposed the final execution of Cleon's decree. Cleon supported it; but, on a division of the General Assembly, there appeared a majority on the side of mercy. The respite arrived at Mitylene, when Paches was in the very act of giving orders for a general massacre. Thuc.

† History of Colonization, p. 128.

to them, but were not permitted to hold offices, nor share in the emoluments of the state. They had a spirit which could not brook this inequality; and their complaints raised such fears and suspicions, that they were thrown into prison, and doomed to execution. But their wives having obtained permission to visit them, and take their last farewell, they changed cloaths, and in that disguise the men made their escape. They instantly got possession of an important fortress, and made so gallant a shew of defence, that the Lacedæmonians offered terms, and assigned the city of Melos for their residence. Here they had remained for many centuries, in full enjoyment of a free Constitution, and in uniform attachment to their founder, Sparta, when the Athenians ordered them to break their union with Sparta, and become the allies of Athens.

There was a conference betwixt deputies appointed by each state. The Melians averred, "That they could not become the ALLIES, without "being at the same time the SLAVES of Athens," which the Athenian deputies were not disposed to contradict, but gave them their choice of SLAVERY or DEATH. They preferred the latter*. And after making a brave defence, were forced at length to surrender. All that were fit to bear arms were put to the sword; the old men, the women, and children, were sold for slaves.

Is it possible to close my narrative of these melancholy events, without observing, how soon a virtuous and free people may degenerate into tyranny and baseness, when luxury and corruption become their habits, and arbitrary taxes the means to support them! The alternative which Athens now gave to those who she thought would not resist her power, was TRIBUTE or DESTRUCTION.

* The whole debate at this conference is minutely related by Thucydides, Book 5.

It was but half a century before this æra, at the eve of the Persian invasion, when the idea of tribute was held in such abhorrence at Athens, that the Athenians stoned one Lycidas, a respectable Senator, to death, for only giving his opinion *, “ That it would be more prudent to pay a small “ tribute to Xerxes, than expose themselves to the resentment of that “ mighty Emperor.”

Your's, &c.

* Herodotus, l. 9.

LETTER

L E T T E R XIV.

October 6, 1778.

S I R,

I N the course of your reading, I know you have imbibed not only those principles of true philosophy, which Lord Bolingbroke ascribes to the study of history, but in the volumes of Pagan history, you must have found many a sentiment of piety and true religion; and that in the minds of wise and good men, throughout all ages and in all nations, there has existed a belief of a superintending Providence, and that the hand of God was always raised to protect the innocent and just, and (if I may take an expression from Scripture) “to break the jaws of the wicked*.” Neither was the idea of a *jealous God* confined to the Mosaic writings. For,

When Xerxes was preparing to invade Greece, and his courtiers all around him were flattering his pride and stimulating his ambition, he had one honest counsellor † who told him TRUTH; who deprecated the wickedness of enslaving a *free*, and the rashness of *attacking* a brave and distant people; who warned him of his impiety, and the danger of provoking God, by aiming at more power than appertains to man. “Don’t you observe (he said) that God strikes the aspiring tower and the lofty oak with lightning, whilst the cottage and the shrub are spared? Don’t you see (he added) that Jupiter directs his thunderbolt against the ravenous

* Job.

† Artabanus, brother of Darius, uncle of Xerxes,

“ and

“ and monstrous beast, whilst the harmless and quiet animal is permitted
 “ to live in safety * ?”

After enslaving so many free states, subverting the government of Samos, and massacring the cities of Lesbos and of Melos, you will not be surprized that Athens herself very soon became an object of that just vengeance, which the corruption and tyranny of her state demanded.

Not long after the death of Cleon, Alcibiades, the nephew and pupil of Pericles, became the leading Demagogue ; a man as capable to give, as the people were to receive, every bad impression : he knew their tempers well, and that by a sedulous application to their prevailing passions, their avarice and their pride, he could make himself a syren to lead them upon any rock that his own genius prompted him to assail.

Under his administration the Melians were destroyed, and on the return of the army from that slaughter, the expedition against Sicily took place. The design had been formed two years before, and every thing was now preparing for its execution.

Alcibiades had his soothsayers, orators and emissaries, in pay, to raise false reports of the nature of the people, and situation of the country ; they magnified the riches, but depreciated the strength of Sicily, describing it as a passive victim, and as an easy prey, that would yield great plenty of taxes to augment the pleasures, and increase the pensions of the citizens. They had maps of the country, and allotted many of them to themselves rich portions of this new conquest. And to such a pitch of

* Ὅρᾳς ὡς τὰ ὑπὲρ ἵκοντα ζῶα κεραιὶ ὁ Θεὸς ὑδὲ ἰᾶ φαίνεται, τὰ δὲ σμικρὰ ὑδὲ μὴ κηρύττει.
 Ὅρᾳς δὲ ὡς ἐς οὐκ ἔχοντα τὰ μέγιστα αἰεὶ καὶ δύναντα, τὰ τοιαῦτα ἱπποκρήνη βίβλια, φιλοὶ γὰρ ὁ
 Θεὸς τὰ ὑπὲρ ἵκοντα πάντα κολοῦσιν.
 Herodotus, l. 7.

enthusiasm were the people brought, that wise, intelligent, and discerning men were afraid to oppose the torrent of their zeal; for whoever presumed to suggest a doubt of the success, or to question the justice, of the enterprise, was looked upon as *disaffected*, and stigmatized as an enemy to his country*.

Nicias, indeed, a man of high birth and great fortune, an able statesman and successful general, was not careful to conceal *his* sentiments; but, to engage him to the undertaking, Alcibiades got him appointed first in command. The preferment was, however, so far from warping his opinion, that when the final decision was brought before the General Assembly, he reminded the people, "How they had crouched under the first disappointments of the last war, and that they were still less able now than at that time to bear defeat. That their enemies were looking with a watchful eye for an opportunity to repair their late disgraces, and to lower the pride of Athens. A general combination would be formed against them, and they were throwing all the force of Sicily into the scale of their natural enemies, who would have been glad to purchase it, at any rate, during the last war. They were roaming (he told them) to a distant climate, where they had not an inch of ground that they could depend on long as their own;—and in the winter seasons, their messengers could not pass for many months. But supposing it practicable to subdue, it would still be impossible to retain the country. And the Sicilians (he added) were a spirited and *free* people, who would never change their liberty for subjection."

* These circumstances are all related by Thucydides, Book 6.

But, on the other side, Alcibiades assured the people, that "The Sicilians were unable to withstand the first shock of the Athenian forces, and were so far from having a competency of warlike stores to make head against a disciplined and well appointed army, that they had not arms sufficient for their personal safety.

"They were (he said) a promiscuous people, of various origins, from various countries, and *disunited* among themselves. Their leaders were factious and seditious men, of no estimation, such as could never cement the people into a regular force, nor form any concerted plan, either for attack or defence."

Alcibiades likewise informed the Assembly, that "There was a numerous body of barbarians in the island, whose friendship and alliance he had secured, and who would be ready to act in conjunction with the Athenian forces."

After hearing these two great speakers, the Assembly decided almost unanimously for war.

Still the Athenians were not totally deceived. They were not drawn into this ruinous war by a persuasion, that "A small army and a moderate expence would suffice for the conquest of Sicily." On the contrary, Nicias (probably to deter them from the undertaking) explained very fully to them, "That an immense army and navy, and immense sums of money were absolutely necessary." But they voted him all that he required; and so confident were they of success, that they gave it in orders to their Generals, "To make a regular assessment of taxes over the whole country, which were to be settled as part of the standing revenue of Athens*."

* Diodorus Siculus.

Innumerable were the spectators assembled to behold the vast armament launch out for Sicily. But there was one intelligent by-stander, who cast a boding eye on the person that stood next him, and with a deep and melancholy sigh, (such as often has burst from your heart and mine under the like sensations) foretold, that "THEY WERE POURING ALL ATHENS
" INTO SICILY."

I will enter into no detail of that eventful expedition. It was true that there were many divisions and factions in Sicily; but when the common enemy appeared, they all united in their common defence. It was also true, that the Athenians had some friends and adherents in the island; but their number was inconsiderable, and they found themselves miserably received by those incendiaries, who encouraged them to undertake the war.

The Lacedæmonians, and the other states, who had taken part against Athens in the Peloponnesian war, remained neuter, till the Athenians were plunged too deep to recede, and till the Sicilians were in too much distress to hold out without foreign aid. At that critical juncture, the Lacedæmonians sent a fleet, which soon turned the course of the war in favour of the Syracusians.

On the first intelligence of a reverse of fortune in Sicily, the Lacedæmonians invaded Attica, and seized the adjacent fortrefs of Deceleâ, which commanded the roads and inlets of provisions to the capitol. A dearth, approaching to famine, was the immediate consequence, and the slaves and mechanics deserted.

The allies and dependent states of Athens seized, with great avidity, the opportunity of revolt; they put themselves under the protection of Sparta, raised armies, and levied voluntary contributions, to redeem themselves from a power that had levied taxes upon them by force.

The Athenians now found their accustomed resources turned against them; the seamen and soldiers that had fought their battles, were in the enemy's fleet and camp; and instead of the great revenues that were to arise from the conquest and taxation of Sicily, they were necessitated to burden themselves with a new and heavy tax, of the twentieth penny upon every article of inland and foreign trade. They even brought into the public service 1000 talents, which were deposited in the temple of Saturn, as a sacred treasure, never to be used but in the greatest exigency.

The particular amount of their loss in Sicily, I have not calculated; but it was not less than the entire destruction of their army, and of the most formidable fleet that had ever appeared in that part of the world. Besides the first embarkation, they sent a large reinforcement of ships and land forces, under Demosthenes and Eurymedon, on the account that Nicias first sent of the arrival of Gylippus, and the melancholy change that happened in the face of their affairs.

When the siege of Syracuse was raised, their army was 40,000 strong, most of whom perished miserably on their retreat; and, at the final surrender, 8000 Athenians became prisoners of war. The commanders were instantly put to death; the inferior officers and soldiers were thrown into dungeons and quarries, to suffer death by various tortures; few escaped, and many of them died by famine.

The news of this event was not easily nor soon credited at Athens. As the surprise abated, the emotions of anger arose, which vented itself on those senators and statesmen who at first deceived the people; "Forgetting" (the historian observes) how loudly their own voices had called for, and "their own sanguine wishes contributed to, those measures, which had "brought their country into a situation so calamitous and so inextricable*."

* Thuc. 1. 8.

Their distresses, however, reclaimed their understandings. They discarded their late ministers, and put the government in the hands of able and upright men. Once more they prepared a powerful fleet, and at Arginusæ (which was the greatest battle that had ever been fought betwixt Grecians and Grecians) they gained a compleat victory. But their navy was too much weakened, their army too much diminished, and their resources too much exhausted by the Sicilian war, to make any long effort against the powers that were combined to reduce them.

Lyfander, the famous Spartan General, soon after his victory at Ægospotamus, besieged the capitol, which surrendered at discretion.

Lyfander caused the walls to be erased, and the demolition was performed before a vast concourse of different nations, with great pomp and festivity, with music, and songs, and general congratulations.

Thus did the scene close; and with as much joy and thanksgiving, as Athens had delivered Greece from the barbarian yoke, did Greece now celebrate her deliverance from the tyranny of Athens.

I have at length finished the task you assigned me, in relating (on the authority of the great classical historians) the consequences of levying Taxes upon the FREE STATES of ANTIQUITY. If you make any applications to modern times, they shall be your own.

You will be glad to change the subject of our future correspondence; but believe me

Ever your's, &c.

P. S. The Athenian writers fix the duration of their Empire at seventy-three years, reckoning from the retreat of Xerxes to the conquest of Lyfander. That period appears to me much too long. The foundation of the Athenian greatness was, indeed, laid at the time when Aristides collected his
his

his first assessments on independent states. But it was all struggle with Sparta for superiority; there was no confirmation of it till the Lacedæmonians sued for peace upon the reduction of Pylus; that event happened fifty-six years after Aristides became treasurer of Greece.

Their fall may (I think) be properly dated from the destruction of their fleets and armies in Sicily; but taking the acknowledged superiority of Athens at the peace of Nicias (which is the true date) to the end of the Peloponesian war, when Lyfander took the city, it contains no more space than sixteen years, which I conceive to be the correct æra of the celebrated Athenian Empire.

75th Olympiad, Aristides was made treasurer of Greece.

85th——Pericles reduced Samos, and the Peloponesian war began.

89th——The Lacedæmonians sued for peace, which was signed by Nicias.

91st——(2d year) The Sicilian war began.

92d——The Sicilian war ended.

93d——Athens surrendered to Lyfander.

L E T T E R XV.

October 14, 1778.

S I R,

THE letter which I had the honour to receive this morning, flattered me exceedingly, as I find you still desirous to protract a subject, which I had reason to suspect you would be heartily tired of.

You wish me to inform you what the specific sentiments are, (if such can be found) of the eminent persons who lived in the times we have been investigating; because, you justly think, they will add great weight to any modern opinion, that may be entertained of the right of taxation over Free States.

Do you remember one morning, when you was impatient to make me quit my study, you called me a mere book-worm? That appellation, I believe, occurs to every man of fashion like yourself, as often as he sees an obscure pedant like me, poring over things that seldom appear above ground in his walk of life.

But you over-rate my pedantry. I must have two properties, in both of which I am very defective, to answer so extensive a demand. I must not only be master of all the learning of antiquity, but have a memory to bring it into one point of view.

But will you be content, if I state a few authorities in each class of philosophers, historians, and orators?

You

You recollect, that in the Grecian states, the idea of obscurity was not annexed to learning. You find the principles of philosophy brought forth to govern public men in the council-chamber, the senate, and field; and that the severest students were the greatest actors on the stage of government.

Aristotle is explicit in giving not only his opinion as a philosopher, but his testimony as an historian, " That the Athenians, by the powers " they exercised over their allies and confederates, violated every compact " by which they were connected *."

You will be satisfied, if I quote Thucidides and Xenophon, on the line of historians. A great part of the former's life, is an indication of his sentiments, in regard of the levying taxes by force; for he was in constant opposition to that system of foreign rapine and home corruption, by which Pericles maintained his power. I have written, at the bottom of my paper, a sentence or two of his, that are pointed to the subject of our enquiry †.

* Aristotle. Οι δ' Αθηναῖοι μὲν περὶ Σαμίων, καὶ Χίων, καὶ Λισσίων, ἐπεὶ γὰρ θαύτην ἐγκρατῆς ἔχον τὴν ἀρχήν, ἐταπείνωσαν αὐτοὺς παρὰ τὰς συνθήκας. Polit. l. 3.

† Thuc. l. i. c. 34. Ἦν δὲ λέγων ὡς οὐ δίκαιον τῆς σφετέρης ἀποικίας ὑμᾶς δέχισθαι, μαθεύσαν ὡς πᾶσα ἀποικία, ἔν μὲν πάσχουσα, τιμᾷ τὴν μητρόπολιν, ἀδικουμένη δὲ, ἀλλοτριεῖται. Οὐ γὰρ ἐπὶ τῷ δέῳ, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τῷ ὅμοιοι τοῖς ληπομένοις εἶναι ἐκπέμπονται.

If they say you have no right to protect the colony of a foreign power, let them know, that every colony honours their parent state so long as she is well treated; but if insulted and injured, she then is alienated. For people emigrate not to be slaves, but to be the *equals* of those whom they leave behind them.

Thuc. l. 3. c. 10. Μῆκερ μὲν ἀπὸ τοῦ Ἰσίου ἠγῶντο προθυμῶς εἰπομεθα. Ἐπειδὴ δὲ ἰωρῶμεν αὐτοὺς τὴν μὲν τῷ Μηδοῦ ἔχθραν ἀνείλας, τὴν δὲ τῶν ξυμμάχων, δούλωσιν ἐπαγομένους, οὐκ ἀδίκως ἔτι ἡμεῖς ἀδύνατοι δὲ ὄντες καθ' ἑν γενόμενοι διὰ πολυψήφιαν ἀμύνασθαι, οἱ ξυμμαχοὶ ἐδουλώθησαν ἡμῶν καὶ Χίων.

Whilst they governed us with humanity, we paid them a willing obedience: but when we saw that they grew remiss in their zeal against the Persians, and intent on enslaving their allies, we could not but take the alarm. Singly no state was able to defend herself; union of councils and measures was impracticable; and thus have the confederates been gradually reduced to slavery.

For the opinion of Xenophon, I refer you to an ingenious treatise which that illustrious author published on the revenues of Athens; the purport of which was, to point out ways and means for defraying the expences of the government, and maintaining the poor citizens, without being under a necessity of extorting taxes from the allies. "For (he says) that on a pretence of supporting their indigent townsmen, the Athenians committed *violence* on the property of their allies *."

If I am to adduce the authority of orators, you will anticipate me in naming Isocrates and Demosthenes; but with the latter, you are too well acquainted to make it necessary for me to recite particular sentences. You know that, in all his orations, he ascribes the ruin of Athens to the loss of her allies, which the imposition of taxes occasioned, and to the corruption of the citizens, for which these taxes supplied the means.

Isocrates never spoke in the General Assemblies, but published his speeches as if *intended to have been spoken*. That mode is, I know, particularly endeared to you, by the publication of an eminent Prelate†, whose life is an honour to his profession, and whose eloquence (you will think me modest in saying) is not inferior, either in sentiment or stile, to the most admired publications of antiquity. Long may this ill-fated nation lament, that it had neither the foresight to discern, nor the virtue to embrace, the truths he told. There is one of Isocrates's speeches that was recited on a very solemn and important occasion. It was at the great festival which was celebrated, once in five years, in commemoration of Theseus. Before the numerous audiences then assembled, it was usual for the most famous orators to stand forth in praise of the state and government

* Xenophon *περί προσόδων*. Διὰ δὲ τὴν τῷ πλῶθι πνίαν, ἀναγκάζονται ἀδικώτεροι εἶναι πρὸς τὰς πόλεις.

† Bishop of St. Asaph.

of Athens. At this time the situation of the Athenians was dangerous and critical; the designs of Philip to destroy them being far advanced towards their completion. The speech which Isocrates composed was publicly read. He seems to have exerted all his knowledge and powers of rhetoric to present his country in a favourable light, and particularly to remove that cause of alienation which arose from the imposition of taxes. Had they originated in *right*, he could not have omitted that ground of defence. * But the justification he alledges, is, that these taxes were the free spontaneous offers of the allies themselves, granted for their own benefit, and for their own security. He even abandons all pretence of justice, and defends the exactions on the plea of necessity only; for he says, “ that
 “ Athens, without these resources, could neither have set the states free
 “ from the barbarian yoke, nor could then defend them from the hateful
 “ and insupportable tyranny of the Lacedæmonians †.”

On the subject of colonization, Isocrates has bequeathed us this emphatic sentence: “ It is a known truth (he says) that Sovereign States
 “ have preserved those colonies the *longest*, to which they have done the
 “ fewest injuries ‡.”

Let us now take leave of ancient history. I cannot help lamenting, that the author of the *History of the Colonization of the Free States of Antiquity*, did not bring his comments down to later times. For his friend and

* Isocrates Panathænæicus. Τοιαῦτα δὲ καὶ περὶ τῆς εἰσπραξέως τῶν φόρων, ἣν τι λέγουσιν ἔξομαι εἰπεῖν. Πρῶτον μὲν γὰρ, ὃ προσταχθέν ὑφ’ ἡμῶν τεῦλ’ ἐπόιεν, ἅλλα καὶ αὐτοὶ γνώσεις, ὅτι, τὴν ἡγεμονίαν ἡμῖν τὴν κατὰ θαλάσσαν ἔδωκαν. Ἐπειτ’ οὐκ ὑπὲρ τῆς σωτηρίας τῆς ἡμετέρας ἔφειρον, ἀλλ’ ἐπὶ τῆς Δημοκρατίας καὶ τῆς ἐλευθερίας τῆς αὐτῶν, &c.

† Ibid. Καὶ δυοῖν πραγμάτων προλεινομένων, καὶ μὴ σπουδαίων, κρείττω τὴν αἵρεσιν εἶναι τῇ δεινᾷ ποιεῖν ἑτέρους ἢ πάσχειν αὐτοὺς ἐνόμισαν. Καὶ τὸ μὴ δικαίως τῶν ἄλλων ἄρχειν μᾶλλον, ἢ φύγοντες τὴν αἰτίαν ταύτην, ἀδικῶς Λακεδαιμονίοις δελεῦν.

‡ Ibid. Καὶ τοὶ πάντες ἴσασι, τὰς πόλεις τὰς ὑφ’ ἑτέροις γινομένης ὅτι πλείους χρόνον τοῖς παραμένουσι ὑφ’ ὧν αὐτοὶ ἰσχυρὰ κακὰ πάσχουσιν τυγχάνουσιν.

celebrated countryman Dr. Robertson, in his history of America, has told us, that the revenues which Spain draws from her colonies, amount to 1,500,000l. a year, and are denominated *The Duties of Vassalage*. "It is remarkable, however, (he says) upon one account; Spain and Portugal are the only European powers who derive a direct revenue from their colonies, as their quota towards defraying the general expences of government."

Why then would the historian search antiquity for false precedents, when modern history affords a real precedent for the taxation of colonies? I presume he thought the Senator of Athens might appear a less exceptionable assessor, than the Spanish Inquisitor at Mexico. But a people, who are guided by principles, and who know the foundations on which freedom of property stands, will pay little regard to localities or form. Tyranny is known, not by the soil, but by the fruits. And the severest slaveries have been inflicted in those states, where the forms of a free constitution remain, but where the spirit of justice, liberty, and virtue, exists no more. It therefore appears not unaccountable, why the Americans should receive a British act of parliament to lay *internal taxes*, just in the same manner as if it had been a Spanish edict, to collect (what Dr. Robertson emphatically terms) *The Duties of Vassalage*.

When I had the pleasure of seeing you, did I mention a circumstance in the conduct of Sir Robert Walpole, that I learnt some years ago? If I did not, it is worth your knowing. It was told me by an intelligent and most respectable member of the last Parliament (Mr. White, of Redford). That worthy old gentleman lived in friendship with Sir Robert, and I believe is the only man of that description, who never would take an emolument from the *Minister*. He gave me this account of his giving up the Excise-scheme. The bill, having been opposed in every stage, was ordered to be reported. The question for its being *reported* was carried by a majority of sixty. The nation was in a ferment, and there had been some dangerous riots.

On

On the evening before the report, Sir Robert summoned a meeting of the principal members who had supported the bill. It was largely attended. He reserved his own opinion till the last; but perseverance was the unanimous voice. It was said all taxes were obnoxious, and there would be an end of supplies, if mobs were to controul the legislature in the manner of raising them. That the execution of this act, could only make the people sensible of its real merit; and if a fair trial was given, and the certain good effects seen and felt, those who had made themselves unpopular by supporting the bill, would receive the applause of the public, and the thanks of their constituents. When Sir Robert had heard them all, he assured them "how conscious he was of having meant well, and how certain that experience would remove every prejudice that had been entertained against the Excise scheme. But in the present inflamed temper of the people, it could not be carried into execution without an armed force. That there would be an end of the liberty of England, if supplies were to be raised by the sword. If, therefore, the resolution was to go on with the bill, he would immediately wait upon the King, and desire his Majesty's permission to resign his office. For he would not be the Minister to enforce taxes, at the probable expence of blood."

No person appearing desirous to take that office upon himself, Sir Robert gave notice, that he would move to adjourn the report for six months, which he did the next day.

I am too happy in your correspondence, not to wish you always to dictate the subject of it. You desire me to close these remarks with what occurs in the wars of Philip II. with the Low Countries. Sometime hence I will obey your commands; but you know I am going soon to Bath, where I hope to meet you. Remember, on your part, the kind promise you gave to furnish me with some materials relative to our own war with America. I am not unacquainted with its rise and progress hitherto. I know the men who involved their country in it, and will give a faithful representation of their principles and conduct. If I should fail, there will be other his-

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torians to do them justice. Their memories shall retain the essence of their lives and actions. *Suum cuique decus posteritas rependit.* If I live to see an end of the war, I will give the best accounts I can of the whole contest from first to last. That is a remote speculation ; but you will forgive the mention of it, as a memorial to request your assistance.

I am ever, Sir, your's, &c.

THE
TRANSLATIONS
OF THE
GREEK NOTES,

With REFERENCES to each respective Page.

Page 13. Demosthenes, first Philippic.

* As the general of an army ought to bring his operations up to the completion of his plans, so ought a Minister to govern events by system, and not wait for events to regulate his measures.

Page 30. Thuc. 1 Book.

* The Athenians then took the lead, but it was among free and independent people, who sat with them in council, and had a vote in all their resolutions.

Page 30. Plutarch's Life of Aristides.

† The confederates, even while Sparta had the ascendancy among them, agreeing to have a general tax for the common support of the war, and to be levied according to the abilities of each state, chose Aristides the Athenian, for their assessor, and invested him with power accordingly.

Page 79. Isocrates Pan.

* If they accuse us of extorting tribute, our answer is, that we demanded nothing, but with their own consent and approbation, as they declared it at the time when they assigned us the government of naval affairs. From that period they have paid their stipulated quotas, not as they alledge, for the advantage of Athens only, but to preserve their own liberty, together with our Democracy.

† They

Page 79.

† They had their choice of two things, neither of which were eligible: either to *commit* violence or to *suffer* it; they were forced to deviate from the strict rules of justice in their government of others, or (to avoid that imputation) expose themselves to the tyranny of the Lacedæmonian state.

Page 79.

‡ It is a known truth, that parent states have preserved those colonies the longest, to which they have done the least injuries.

F I N I S.

